THE RECONSTRUCTION OF BELIEF

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THE
RECONSTRUCTION OF BELIEF

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CAN WE THEN BELIEVE?

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SPIRITUAL EFFICIENCY.

THE PERMANENT CREED AND THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SIN.

OBJECTIONS TO THE EDUCATION BILL, 1906, IN PRINCIPAL AND IN DETAIL.

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THE
RECONSTRUCTION OF BELIEF

BELIEF IN GOD. BELIEF IN CHRIST
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

BY CHARLES GORE, D.D.

HON. D.D. EDIN. AND DURHAM, HON. D.C.L. OXFORD, HON. LL.D. CAMBRIDGE
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ORIGINAL PREFACE TO BOOK I

BELIEF IN GOD

1. *Homme propose : Dieu dispose.* But anyway I *propose* to issue an ordered and reasoned statement of my faith as a Christian, as far as may be without assumptions, or, as I call it, a "Reconstruction of Belief," in three volumes, of which this is the first, dealing respectively with Belief in God, Belief in Jesus Christ, and Belief in the Holy Spirit and in the Church. There will be no reference to ecclesiastical authority in the first two volumes, but it will be seriously considered in the last. If the critics take notice of me and argue against my conclusions, I propose to issue a fourth supplementary volume of dissertations and discussions, in order to expand, buttress, or modify arguments or conclusions.

I endeavour to appeal to the ordinary educated reader. If any such finds the book stiff, I think he would be assisted by reading first the analysis of the argument which begins the last chapter, pp. 283–8.

2. My argument is positive. It is a statement of the reasons which seem to me convincing on behalf of a certain type of belief. It is not concerned, except incidentally, in describing, or arguing against, rival beliefs. Thus I offer no survey of the rival beliefs of current philosophers, such as is offered by Mr. W. R. Matthews in his admirable *Studies in Christian*

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Philosophy (Macmillan, 1921), but I hope I have indicated sufficiently both where I rely upon them and where they do not satisfy me.

My statement is also individual. It presents the arguments which finally, after long thinking, have seemed to satisfy my own mind. But I confess that the form of ordered argument, starting without presuppositions and proceeding from point to point, does not represent the way in which my convictions have been actually reached. I am conscious of certain strong predispositions towards certain beliefs, which seem to be inherent in me, and I will venture to be so far autobiographical as to enumerate them, so far as they are relevant.

(*a*) I have, ever since I was an undergraduate, been certain that I must be in the true sense a free thinker, and that either not to think freely about a disturbing subject, or to accept ecclesiastical authority in place of the best judgement of my own reason, would be for me an impossible treason against the light. I must go remorselessly where the argument leads me. Thus when in the early seventies I was preparing for ordination, and Ewald had seriously convinced me that the old-fashioned view of the Old Testament was impossible to hold, it never presented itself to me as possible that I could substitute the traditional view in place of the scientific in my own mind on the ground of authority or agree to teach it. There was nothing for it but to make what seemed to me fairly certain as evident as possible to my examiners for orders, and also to show how reconcilable I thought it with the Creeds. But at the same time a cordial agreement with Ruskin against the dominant Political

Economists, and other causes, prevented my ever confusing my duty to reason with any attribution of infallibility to the intellectuals of the day.

(*b*) I have always felt deeply, being by disposition pessimistic, the arguments against the love of God. I have always thought that the only very difficult dogma of the Church was the dogma that God is Love. But deeper than any difficulty has been the feeling that at the roots of my being I am confronted with God, from whom I cannot get away, and that the God who confronts me there is the Living God of the prophets and of Jesus Christ. Equally deep was the feeling that the Christian life was certainly "the Way," and that it was foolish to suppose that it could flourish except on its own intellectual roots and in its own proper mental soil. Also I have never been able to feel that any of the various humanitarian estimates of Christ was in any degree satisfying.

(*c*) Finally, though this has no bearing on the present volume or its next projected successor, I have since my childhood been what I may call a Catholic by mental constitution. I remember very well, when I was eight or nine—sixty years ago—reading a book by a Protestant author—a Presbyterian, I think—entitled *Father Clement*, about the conversion of a Catholic priest to Protestantism. I have never read it since. I had been brought up in ordinary old-fashioned English Church ways. I had only attended very Low Church services. I had never heard of the Oxford movement. I knew nothing about Catholicism, except as a strange superstition, called Popery. But the book described confession and absolution, fasting, the Real Presence, the devotion of the Three Hours, the use of incense, etc., and I felt instinctively and at once that this sort of sacramental religion was the religion for me. From that day most of the people who influenced my intellect, when I was young, were agnostics or Protestants or "outsiders" to the Catholic faith—Carlyle, Ruskin, Edward Bowen, T. H. Green—but this predisposition remained quite unaltered. My mental life has consisted in the process of confronting such predispositions with the results, so far as I have been able to see them, of philosophy and science and criticism (with a native tendency always to anticipate the worst), and to seek a unity or synthesis in which all the light I could get would be allowed its full force, without my innermost self being quenched or blinded. What I am daring to present to the public is the result of this sort of process, continued over forty and more years.

3. Like others, as I view the world and the Church—especially the Church of England—at the present day, I cannot feel hopeful about the immediate prospect. The prophets and experience alike convince me that there can be no real social recovery except through a general return to God. And of such a return I see no signs. God has smitten; but in general we have not sought Him. Thus, taught by the prophets, I am ready to anticipate scathing judgements. But the prophets also teach us to hold with unquenchable faith to the divine purpose of progress, through all the catastrophes and judgements which widespread apostasy from God brings with it. The purpose remains, and the end is sure. No right effort is going to be lost. And the instrument through which God

works is the "faithful remnant" of those who believe Him and obey Him at all costs. Of such, I feel persuaded, there is among us as large a body, and as genuine, as at any previous period of history. What is needful for them is to think out their principles, individually and collectively: so that they shall know what they believe and why they believe. And these volumes, which I offer to God with a prayer for His blessing, are intended to help them in the task.

CHARLES GORE.

Michaelmas 1921.

ORIGINAL PREFACE TO BOOK III

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

DR. JOHN DONNE, the famous Dean of St. Paul's, published, about 1630, certain *Paradoxes and Problems*, of which one was the problem, "Why doe young lay-men so much study divinity?" I do not suppose that anyone would consider himself called upon to investigate this problem to-day. But there is still a large number of men and women, young or old, for whom the questions of 'divinity' are the most interesting and important of all questions, and it is in their interest that these volumes on "The Reconstruction of Belief" have been written.

In the earlier volumes—*Belief in God* and *Belief in Christ*—no reference was made to the authority of the Church or the Bible. I endeavoured to pursue a purely critical method. I sought to construct the fabric of belief which seemed to me the most probable on the evidence. In result it appeared that the intellectual construction which best satisfied the requirements of reason and criticism was substantially the traditional faith of Christendom.

I

This method has been misunderstood from different quarters. On one side it has been accused of rationalism and individualism. But I think unjustly. I never concealed from my readers that the method pursued in these books was not in my case, any more than with the vast majority of mankind, the method by which my intellectual convictions had been actually obtained. Almost all men in some sense come to believe whatever they believe, whether about nature or about God, on authority of some sort and by various kinds of emotional and moral attractions. But, however we come to believe, the test of the rationality of our faith lies in its submission to the light of reason and history. It is, as I contend at length in this volume, quite a false view of authority which represents it as precluding free enquiry. It is our intellectual duty and responsibility to think freely. In recent times a vast deal of language has been used which presents the position of tradition as opposed to the position of reason and criticism—as if we had to choose between authority and reason. The best way to show that this is not the case is to abstain from all appeal to authority and to show that the construction which best responds to all the evidence is a construction which is, in its general effect and all its main lines, conservative of tradition. For this free appeal to reason and criticism there is precedent of the most weighty kind in some of the greatest names among the theologians of the Church.

There is, of course, a risk in thinking freely. Free thinking, free criticism, may lead us away from the faith. And I cannot deny that at the last resort it is a man's duty to follow his conscience and reason even if they lead him (as I think) widely astray. And I believe that, as God is good, for such a man the way of reason and conscience sincerely and faithfully followed will be ultimately the way to the light. Of course a minister of the Christian religion who, by thinking freely, is led by irresistible conviction outside the central tradition of the faith he was ordained to maintain, must cease to hold office as a minister of the Church. None the less he is morally bound to follow his personal convictions. I cannot deny this. But I believe that the main reason, intellectually speaking, why so many men have been led (as I think) astray in their personal convictions on religious subjects, is because the Church has appeared to them not to be encouraging free thinking or criticism. It has been asking for an irrational submission. And I think the best service that a student can do for the faith is to show that the conclusions which are the most probable, on the evidence freely examined, are the conclusions which are embodied in the Creed of the Church. That is what I have been trying to do. I repudiate the charge that, as an orthodox professor of religion, I am 'reasoning in chains.' However I got my faith, I am convinced with an ever-growing conviction that, far better than any other hypothesis, it satisfies the evidence; though in order to do this it has in each age to purge itself of inherited mistakes and misunderstandings.

Of course the majority of men have not the vocation or the opportunities of a student. They also must 'test all things'; but the testing will be mainly the testing of moral experience. But students are part of the equipment of the Church; and the intellectual reassurance of the average Christian lies largely in the consciousness that the students of the Church are facing the facts, and are open to the light, whencesoever it comes, and however novel or even revolutionary it seems; and are showing themselves constantly able to express what is substantially the old Creed in terms of the new knowledge. If men do not feel this—as has too often been the case—the average Christian becomes ashamed of his faith and intellectually disheartened. Thus in these volumes it has been my aim to consult the interests of the ordinary educated man by presenting properly intellectual and critical reasonings and conclusions in language which the unacademic mind can understand.

II

From the side of 'Modernism' I have been charged with not going far enough. 'If you accept such and such critical conclusions, e.g. that this or that reported saying of our Lord in the First Gospel cannot be relied on, you ought to go much further and accept such and such a representation of Christ which is seriously opposed to the tradition.' This sort of argument is not at all impressive in the abstract. In almost every intellectual movement which deeply stirs mankind there is an element of solid advance in perception of the truth and also a great deal of exaggeration. It seems to me (as to St. Chrysostom of old) quite impossible to maintain the literal infallibility of the Gospel records. On the other hand, it seems to me certain that these records, if they are approached on genuinely critical lines, yield historical results which are as certain as historical results can be; and that the purely humanitarian or non-miraculous estimate of Christ, or even such an estimate of Him as the late Dr. Emmet and Miss Dougall recently presented in *The Lord of Thought*, does violence to the evidence on the largest scale.[1] I do not think the verbal accuracy of the Gospels can always be defended. But I think their substantial truth is what alone can account for the earliest history of the Christian Church and for its deepest spiritual experience.

III

What I have done so far is to vindicate to my own satisfaction the rationality of the traditional faith in God and in Jesus Christ as the incarnation of God.

---

[1] In the above I have had in mind a review of *Belief in Christ* in *The Church Quarterly*, April 1923, p. 24, by the late Dr. Emmet. As one who knew him not only as a friend and as a Biblical critic, but also as an excellent parish priest, I desire to pay him the tribute of a deep regret.

But as He passes from the scene there takes His place in history " the Church which is His body," inspired by His Spirit, claiming to be His appointed representative and the organ of His continual life among men. Thus, to complete my plan, I must set myself to study the faith in the Holy Spirit and in the Church. And this enquiry must be in the first instance again purely critical. It is widely denied that the Church represented the deliberate intention of Jesus Christ. He founded no Church, we are told, and instituted no sacraments. The idea of the sacramental church, which already in the New Testament occupies the ground, does not belong to the Jewish root of Christianity and is not to be ascribed to Jesus. Its real origin is to be found in the ' mystery religions,' which had a vast influence on the primitive Gentile communities. These critical questions have to be considered, and the idea of the religion of the Spirit in the Church, as it is presented in the New Testament, has to be set in as clear a light as possible (chaps. i–iv, pp. 621–770).

When this is done, we shall find ourselves face to face with the question of church authority, which has hitherto been deliberately ignored, and on which, to judge from the reviews of my books, the curiosity of ' the religious world ' is mainly centred. I strive to present what I think is the true and original idea of authority in religion (v, p. 771), and to distinguish it from its perversion (vi, p. 804), and to distinguish the true from the false idea of the development of Christian doctrine (vii, p. 828), and to maintain the authority of Holy Scripture in a sense which seems to me compatible with historical science (viii, p. 864). This leads on to an attempt to summarize the results of accepting the authority of the Church and of the Scriptures, and to answer the question ' What then is of faith ? ' or ' What is essential orthodoxy ? ' (ix, p. 902).

Then, to reassure those who are alarmed at a long string of articles 'of faith,' I seek to show that there is a strong solidarity amongst them; and that they follow with a certain inevitable sequence from the fundamental acceptance of the Biblical conception of God and man and human sin, or, from another point of view, are coherent with the principle of the Incarnation. There is only one principle at stake, not a variety of independent principles (chap. x, p. 937).

Then finally (xi, p. 956) I attempt to show the bearing of all this body of conclusions on the problem of the present day and on the vocation of that district of the Catholic Church to which I belong. But this can, of course, only be done in outline. I am, as every good Christian must be, deeply moved by the revived interest in the reunion of Christendom; and I have been always quite ready—perhaps too ready—to take my part in the controversies which the question of reunion raises about Romanism, Orthodoxy, Anglicanism, and Protestantism. But of one thing I feel sure. There will be no real progress towards fellowship except so far as men are prepared to view the questions about the Creed and the Church and the sacraments and the ministry afresh, laying aside their traditional assumptions as far as possible in order to ask again the question—What is the mind of Christ concerning the propagation of His religion? Does it not after all appear to be in a high degree probable that the New Testament documents interpret it aright, and that we cannot get behind them or away from them?

And this volume, no less than those which preceded it, is a challenge to men to think freely. We are apt to 'reason in fetters.' And to-day the fetters are quite as likely to be the fetters of what professes to be 'criticism' but is really a false philosophy which denies the transcendence of God and (very probably) the real freedom of man, as the fetters of an unreasoning orthodoxy. And when we come down to the region of current ecclesiastical controversies, the fetters are likely to be those of the spirit of our party, which is apt to be singularly enslaving. But whatever the source of possible enslavement, the challenge of these books to men is to dare to think freely.

I cannot help expressing my regret that a book about the Holy Spirit, which one would wish to make devotional, should by the necessities of the case be so dominantly argumentative. Nevertheless I dare to invoke His blessing in sending it out into the world.

C. G.

6 Margaret Street,
London, W.1.
Epiphany, 1924.

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BOOK I

BELIEF IN GOD

BELIEF IN GOD

CHAPTER I

THE BREAKDOWN OF TRADITION

The world in which we live to-day can only be described as chaotic in the matter of religious beliefs. Of course there are very many persons whom lack of seriousness or lack of education renders indifferent to religious problems. And there are some intelligent and serious people who more or less deliberately and successfully seclude themselves from the strife of tongues and live unmoved in the light of their own religious traditions ; and others again who, in despair of attaining the religious peace which they need by any other means, take refuge under the shelter of some religious authority which admits of no questioning, whether it be the Roman Catholic Church or Christian Science. But wherever men and women are to be found who care about religion and feel its value, and who at the same time feel bound, as they say, " to think for themselves," there we are apt to discover the prevailing note—not the only note, but the prevailing note—to be that of uncertainty and even bewilderment, coupled very often with a feeling of resentment against the Church or against organized religion on account of what is called its " failure."

Now, there are no doubt some speculative or curious people who find the sceptical temper with its attendant uncertainties tolerable or even enjoyable enough. They are content to "spend their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." It is enough for them that each new view is "interesting"; they pass their life "ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth." But it is not so with most men. The feeling of hopeless uncertainty breeds in them a distaste for positive creeds, and they drift away from religion altogether.

But it is ignoble to acquiesce in this sort of scepticism without at least a serious effort. It is my belief that a great deal of scepticism is due, not really to the absence of adequate grounds for conviction, but to confusion of mind, to an excessive deference to current intellectual fashions, and to the fact that a man has never thoroughly and systematically faced the problems. It seems to me that the right course for anyone who cannot accept the mere voice of authority, but feels the imperative obligation to "face the arguments" and to think freely, is to begin at the beginning and to see how far he can reconstruct his religious beliefs stage by stage on a secure foundation, as far as possible without any preliminary assumptions and with a resolute determination "to know the worst." This at least is the only course which the present writer has found himself able either to adopt in his own case or to recommend to others in a like case. It means of course an equally frank cross-questioning of traditional religious beliefs and of the current dogmas of the contemporary intellectual world. This is too often forgotten. There is a very large number of people who reject traditional religious authority with contempt, and go on even naïvely to accept, without any serious questioning, the oracles of the day.

But this is manifestly foolish. If we refuse to be frightened by one kind of authority, we must not be frightened by another. New views have frequently proved at least as misleading as old traditions.[1] The only satisfactory way for a man to save his own soul, or to become capable of helping others, is freely to use his own real judgement and accept the responsibility of decision in the fullest light that he can come by.

Deliberately to enter upon this process of reconstruction from the beginning does not, of course, mean the abandonment during the process of the religious beliefs and practices which a man holds already in use. Quite the contrary. He will make the most of the precious gift of faith, even while he is enquiring into its basis. It is part of the experience which he is to interpret. It gives him his understanding of the questions at issue. Moreover, though the process of reconstruction will be more or less different in the case of each person, according as the intellectual equipment and opportunity of individuals are different, yet it is and ought to be possible for all who have to face life for themselves and use their powers of thought. All that is really essential is sincerity and the readiness to make the necessary effort of mind.[2] And it is the aim of this volume to help especially the ordinary educated man and woman.

But I would add that there is no class for whom this process of fundamental reconstruction of their religious beliefs is so necessary as for those who are, or are preparing to become, ministers of the Christian Church. They are often enthusiasts for religion, who have no personal doubts, but are eagerly interested in a great many questions, doctrinal and ceremonial and social; and their temptation is to take up the questions that interest them, which are secondary and derivative, and not really to study and test their foundations. Very likely they will themselves experience reactions and fall into fundamental doubts later in life. Certainly, if they are to be true to their high vocation, they will be constantly occupied in helping others who are in doubt. In either case they will find themselves paralysed if they have never explored their foundations. It is only those who know, from the ground upwards, what they believe and why they believe, who can help either themselves or others in the time of stress. It is only those who are felt to have a real ground for their beliefs and a real sympathy with free enquiry whose help will be sought by those who need it. And it is pitiful to see how many there are among the professed ministers of Christ who, in an hour of popular discussion of some vital truth, are proved, by their perplexity and dismay, or by their uninstructed denunciations, never to have thought at all seriously or deeply about the most momentous questions.

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[1] See additional note at end of the chapter.

[2] See Bernard Bosanquet, *What Religion Is* (Macmillan, 1920), p. viii. "'As a little child . . .'; that has been the motto, as of the saints, so of the wisest among mankind Your mind is a good instrument; only keep it free and sincere; keep away from selfishness, self-conceit, from the vanity of learning, and from the vanity of resentment against learning. Open it to experience, and take that as largely as you can. We know the type of man who on the whole gets nearest to truth. It is not the cleverest. It is, I think, the sincerest."

It is, then, the aim of this book to rehearse the process of reconstruction which has been slowly and laboriously and again and again enacted in the writer's own soul and mind, with as single an eye for the truth—from whatever source, new or old, it may come—as he has been able to win for himself. But before making a beginning it is necessary to examine the existing situation in order that we may understand what are the causes of the profound unsettlement of religious beliefs in our present society. Such an analysis must precede reconstruction by enabling us to interpret aright the breadth and the profundity of the gulf which has to be filled.

It may be said with substantial truth that in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, however much scepticism existed in special intellectual circles—and there was a great deal of it—yet on the whole popular religion in England, for all its divisions, had a substantial basis of agreement, a common doctrine which was accepted as a matter of course ; and this accepted religion, intellectually considered, had two main pillars of support. For its "Natural Religion," or belief in God, the "argument from design" was the sufficient foundation, and that in the form given it by the established scientific doctrine of the fixity of species, or "special creations." This was triumphantly used as against all atheists. "Can you look at the different orders and species which nature presents to you, each elaborately designed to fulfil certain functions, and each fixed, as science tells us, in its essential characteristics from the beginning, and doubt that they must have been created for the purposes which they fulfil by a designing mind—the almighty Creator of the universe ?" This was the argument of Paley's brilliant book on *Natural Theology*. Then for Revealed Religion—Christianity —the pillar of support was the authority of Holy Scripture, considered not merely as containing the record of the word of God, but as being in all its parts the word of God, and therefore in all its affirmations on all subjects of infallible authority. Though the teaching of the leaders of the Reformation in Germany about the authority of the Bible had been in some cases much more discriminating,[1] yet in England, at any rate, after the weakening of the authority of the Church at the Reformation, the accepted appeal had come to be simply to the infallible book. "The Bible and the Bible only" was "the religion" of Protestant Englishmen.

Now it is not too much to say that, *in their existing forms*, both those great supports of popular religion were destroyed in the estimation both of men of science and of the mass of educated people in the middle of the last century. We will take first the argument from design.

1. The fixity of species from the beginning of creation might seem to be naturally deducible from the story of the creation in Genesis, taken literally, as for example it is presented by Milton in *Paradise Lost.* But as a matter of fact the idea appears first not in Christian fathers or schoolmen, but as a scientific conclusion of the seventeenth century[2]—a conclusion drawn especially from the limits within which interbreeding is possible. Francis Bacon plainly knows nothing of it. It is to be found first, I believe, in the writings of John Ray (1628–1705), who is called "the founder of modern zoology"; it was affirmed by Linnaeus in his *Philosophia Botanica* (1751) as a sort of dogma: "There are as many different species as the Infinite Being originally created different forms."[3]

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[1] See T. M. Lindsay's *Hist. of the Reformation* (Clark, 1907), vol. i, pp. 453 ff.

[2] See Aubrey Moore, *Science and the Faith* (Kegan Paul, 1889), p. 173

[3] He suggests elsewhere, however, an extension of view according to which all the different *species* of a *genus* were originally one *species*.

In spite of occasional doubts or protests or positive theories of evolution expressed by Buffon, Goethe, Erasmus Darwin, Treviranus, and Lamarck, this doctrine held the field in the scientific world, till Charles Darwin and Wallace destroyed it. It was then not primarily a theological, but a scientific doctrine, based on observation, no doubt incomplete; and when Darwin speaks of its being "like confessing a murder"[1] to confess to the opinion that species are not immutable, the solid body of hostile opinion that he is thinking of is not that of the theologians, but of the scientific world.[2] But this scientific doctrine had naturally been made use of in the interests of "natural religion," and made the basis of the argument from design. It was an argument (as it appears in Paley) compact, intelligible, and incontrovertible. "Each of these kinds of plants and animals is obviously *designed* to fulfil its functions. Science on its own ground teaches you that each *kind* (i.e. each group of living things which are fertile *inter se*) has been sub-

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[1] *Life*, ii, 23.

[2] In Paley's *Natural Theology*, chap. v (*Works*, vol. iv, p. 50). The theory of the appearance of design in nature being due to "natural selection" (as Darwin afterwards called it) acting upon the profusion of nature, which produces every kind of variation and every conceivable form—eliminating those forms which "by the defect of their constitution [were] incapable of preservation and of continuance by generation" and suffering only the fit to survive—is considered by Paley and rather contemptuously rejected. The theory was, in fact, first given reasonable consistency and plausibility by Darwin. Darwin himself denies that before he published his *Origin of Species* "the subject was in the air" or "that men's minds were prepared for it." In his intercourse with naturalists he says he "never happened to come across a single one who seemed to doubt about the permanence of species" (*Life*, i, 87). It is not necessary, however, here to review the controversy raised by Samuel Butler and renewed by Bernard Shaw as to the precise nature of the achievement of Darwin in the history of the doctrine of evolution.

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stantially what it is, apart from superficial variations, from the beginning. You cannot reasonably doubt, therefore, that it was created by an original designer, the author and maker of all that is."[1] But in this form Darwin—it is not too much to say—seemed completely to overthrow the argument from design. Nature was now presented under a new aspect. Granted matter and force and law—including living matter, with its constant tendency to variation in all sorts of directions—the whole world, with all its infinite forms, appeared as having through countless ages grown of itself, or automatically. The exact specific form of each kind of plant and animal was now represented as being due, not to the Creator having originally so made it, but to the fact that, among the infinite varieties of forms which the profusion of nature poured forth, one form at each stage proved itself the best adapted to survive, and in the struggle for existence—which is due to nature producing at each moment far more specimens of each kind than can survive—natural selection had cleared the spaces of nature by killing off all the innumerable specimens less suited to survive, and leaving the field to the one which had the best survival value. The appearance of design is thus due, not to any original creative act, but to the fact that out of innumerable hosts of things produced those only survived the struggle and successfully propagated their kind which were the best adapted to their surroundings. Of course, in the pages of Darwin the doctrine is stated with cautions and reservations and limitations which

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[1] Kant's famous criticism of the argument from design hardly touched its popular use. Moreover, his chief concern is to show that the argument, if valid, would prove only a designer of great power and wisdom, not an absolute creator, almighty and all-wise.

"popular science" ignored. It is also the case that Darwin's positions and suggestions have not in all cases proved scientifically acceptable. But what we are now concerned with is only the original effect on the popular imagination of Darwin's theory. There it presented itself as a doctrine of nature making itself—a process which, granted the initial materials and laws,[1] seemed to explain itself without requiring any God to design it or "make it up." Man, moreover, appeared as, in his physical structure, only one form of animal life, perfected in the struggle for existence, especially in virtue of pre-eminent mental qualities, which yet (it was suggested) were only developments of the mental qualities which had progressively appeared in the animal world generally. Thus instead of a being created perfect, in the full glory of intellectual and moral power, as Milton and South, interpreting or misinterpreting the Bible, had represented him, who fell from his first glory and only after long ages could be restored to it by a divine act of redemption—man now appeared as starting from the lowest depth among the anthropoid apes, and only slowly climbing up from among his animal ancestry, by his own efforts through long ages, to a dignity such as he now enjoys. So the acceptance of Darwinism seemed in the popular imagination to destroy not only the argument from design, in its shortest and most effective form, but also the Bible doctrine of the origin of man and of his fall, which, in its turn, lay at the root of Christianity.

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[1] All the Darwinians agreed with Clifford that "of the beginning of the universe we know nothing at all." There is in Adolphe Retté's account of his conversion to Catholicism, *Du diable à Dieu*, an amusing narrative of how, in his agnostic days, his intellectual conscience was scandalized by the hope expressed by some working men, after listening to a lecture of his, that nowadays science would prove itself able to explain the origin of all things without the doctrines of religion or the assistance of priests. This, he was bound to confess, was precisely what science cannot do. It is concerned with process, not origin.

Very likely if the Darwinian doctrine of development had been formulated much earlier—let us say in the fourth century, in the atmosphere generated by Greek philosophical Christianity—it would have produced no such shock. The idea that the early chapters of Genesis are "allegory" and not history had been widely held in the early Church, and not only in the Alexandrian school. Augustine himself, as is well known, following St. Gregory of Nyssa, had propounded the view that God in the beginning created only germs or causes of the forms of life, which were afterwards to be developed in gradual course [1]; and it had been repeatedly asserted by the leaders of the Church that the first man was not created perfect—for it is God's method to do things gradually—but only in a fit state to advance towards perfection.[2] Accommodation, then, between the points of view of science and religion would probably have been much easier then than it was in the nineteenth century. But it is in the nineteenth century and not in the fourth that we are now interested.

We are not yet concerned with balancing and estimating evidences and probabilities, or with distinguishing what was the real religious outcome of the new science from its popular effect, or what was essential Christianity from its current form. We are simply concerned to estimate the shock to the religious imagination which the speedy and world-wide acceptance of Darwin's conclusions, with whatever modifications, inevitably produced.

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[1] Aug. *de Gen. ad lit*, v, 5 and 23, and St. Gregory of Nyssa *in Hexaem*, *P.G.* xliv, 72, etc.

[2] See *Lux Mundi*, p. 393, n. 2; also that man from his creation was naturally mortal or subject to death, p. 395.

It must be noticed that this was only the last of many shocks. When Milton wrote his *Paradise Lost*, he could still—though with hesitation—present the old and comfortable view of the universe which made this world the centre of the whole system of creation. I call it comfortable, because it made mankind so obviously the central object in the divine purpose. In a few days the universe had been prepared by God for the dwelling-place of man, with the world, his home, as its centre, and the sun and the moon to give him light, and the stars to give glory to his sky and perhaps to portray his destiny; and man had been introduced in perfection and glory into his dwelling-place, to be its earthly sovereign, all within the space of a few days a few thousand years ago. But science had aimed a series of blows at this comfortable and compact scheme. Astronomy first had shattered the geocentric theory, by disclosing the world as only a minor planet revolving round its central sun, while our whole solar system was only one of innumerable systems which stretch through infinite space . . . till the brain reels beneath the attempt to realize them; and, on this showing, man and his dwelling become a mere speck in an unimaginable infinitude of systems. Next geology had taken up the tale where astronomy left it, and rolled out its almost infinite ages while the world was in making, till man, a speck in space, became no more than a moment in time. And now, once again, biology, taking up the tale from astronomy and geology, seemed to make mankind only one phase (why more than a passing phase?) in the evolution of life—a bubble, as it were, on the changing, flowing river. The effect of all those disclosures upon the religious imagination can hardly be exaggerated. They seemed, as represented in popular literature, almost to obliterate God behind a self-developing universe, and to reduce the position of man to insignificance, and to contradict all that view of his history which the Bible had enforced or suggested.

Before we leave this particular "shock to religion," it must not be overlooked that the imagination of each age is affected chiefly by the most successful and progressive form of intellectual work current at the time. The leading representatives of effective intellect in earlier ages had been philosophers or theologians or poets or artists. Now, beyond all question, the popular representatives of effective intelligence were the scientific men and the practical men who were using science to develop the resources of civilization. And the age—I speak of the Victorian age — was optimistic. Science and "secular" education were to be the instruments of unlimited progress and universal peace. Nothing was needed but to educate men and make them free to compete. Then universal competition would bring the best to the front, and mankind would go ahead to a glorious future. The universe was the scene of what appeared to be regarded as a necessary law of progress, of which science was the chief minister and instrument. Darwin and Huxley might shake their heads and declare that science could utter no optimistic prophesies. But the spirit of the age was not to be quenched by their warnings. And within a restricted region science responded magnificently to the task assigned to her. Material progress, of a kind, was manifest in all directions. No wonder the popular imagination worshipped "science" and "progress," and discarded the old-fashioned arguments for religion, and was disposed to take reprisals on the Church as an enfeebled tyrant which had unsuccessfully set itself to resist each advance of scientific discovery, and which was, moreover, discredited by its manifest abuses, so repellent to the Liberal spirit. No wonder materialism or agnosticism prevailed, and Herbert Spencer became the prophet of enlightenment.[1]

2. And contemporaneously with the great scientific movement, of which Darwin is the central figure, there emerged within the horizon of the religious world, which had been building its spiritual fabric upon the infallibility of Scripture, the startling conclusions of literary and historical criticism. To an extent that we do not to-day easily realize, this was a new science[2]; and it was a real science which was to open out vast regions of human knowledge, especially of the earlier stages of civilization. It had

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[1] For the present scientific position of the theory of evolution, after seventy years of criticism, see the excellent sketch of J. A. Thomson and P. Geddes, *Evolution* (Home University Library: Williams & Norgate), or to *Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge* (Blackie, 1925). For an estimate of the real spiritual effect of the newer biological theories, reference may still be made to Aubrey Moore's *Science and the Faith*, as well as to a multitude of more recent books. But to such considerations we shall have to return when we are occupied in reconstruction.

[2] See Gooch's *History and Historians in the XIXth Century* (Longmans), pp. 10 ff. I think it is really suggestive to notice Samuel Johnson's estimate of history and historians as reported by Boswell. "Great abilities," he said, "are not requisite for an historian; for in historical composition all the greatest powers of the human mind are quiescent. He has facts ready to his hand; so that there is no exercise of invention. Imagination is not required in any high degree; only about as much as is used in the lower kinds of poetry. Some penetration, accuracy, and colouring will fit a man for the task, if he can give the application which is necessary" (see under the year 1763 in Boswell's *Life*, chap. vii).

applied itself in the person of Wolf to show that Homer's epics were not the work of one man at one time, but the slowly growing product of a whole epoch, however great the genius of the man or men who fixed the tradition in its final form. And it had applied itself in the person of Niebuhr to the history of Rome. In that region it had traced the emergence of history, as a trustworthy record of the facts as they occurred, out of the mythical stories and traditional lore which lie behind history; which in varying degrees contain historical material of a very important kind, but which are certainly not historical in the form in which they were handed down.

This same critical science then applied itself to the Bible records. Thus De Wette (1780–1843) and Ewald (1803–1875) and their successors led students to perceive that in the early chapters of Genesis what we are dealing with is not an historical record of human origins, revealed by God and accurately handed down from father to son in human tradition. What supplied the material of these early stories were the first efforts of the human imagination seeking, without materials to work upon, to construct a picture of the origins of the world and of man, and of sin and suffering and death. Similar stories of the Creation and the Flood existed, it appeared, among the Babylonians. No doubt what was characteristic of the Hebrew narrative was its astonishing dignity and purity of spiritual truth. That certainly suggested divine inspiration; but its subject-matter was the early product of the human imagination "making up a picture" of human origins. It was not history—neither the story of Creation, nor of the Fall, nor of the Flood, nor of the Tower of Babel; moreover, there were easily to be detected different and incompatible narratives of the Creation and the Flood interwoven in our present Book of Genesis.

Later, it appeared, we had to do with tradition in which the names of races akin to Israel appeared as individuals, and their mutual qualities and relations were reflected back into the histories of their supposed founders. Gradually from traditional history we get out upon the solid ground of real chronicle. It is the task of criticism to discriminate the character of the different portions of the Bible, whether they be like the legends of the Arthurian cycle, or like the legend of Charlemagne—a legend woven round a solidly historical person—or like the tradition of a saint among his monastic brethren, or the precise chronicle.

One special feature of ancient literature is the tendency to heap upon great founders all the gradually successive outcomes of their foundation. Thus the various codifications of the Law of Israel were traditionally ascribed to the first founder of their polity, Moses. But Moses certainly did not write the Pentateuch, nor did he do all that is there ascribed to him. Again, the Psalms as a whole were ascribed to David, but only a very small portion of them can have been actually of his authorship. Once more, a great unknown prophet at the end of the Captivity carried on the work of Isaiah in a new moment of history, and his work is incorporated with Isaiah's and called by his name.

Moreover, even in later times, the function of history is not strictly distinguished from that of edification. Thus the books of Chronicles were history written not as it was, but as in the judgement of the scribe it ought to have been and must have been. And stories with a moral, not strictly historical, like the narrative part of Daniel or the story of Esther, appear also among the sacred books.

Apart from questions of detail, or of more or less, all this account of the Hebrew literature appeared to be very convincing in the light of what we know of human history everywhere. It rapidly converted the scholars; but it was very revolutionary. And it presented itself to the ordinary man as the discovery that the Bible is not true—woman was not really made of a rib taken from the side of man; the Garden of Eden was a myth; mankind was not saved from a universal deluge in the persons of Noah's family in an ark; the Tower of Babel was not a true account of the origin of languages; many things written in the Bible did not actually happen—could not indeed have happened as is described: the Bible had been proved not to be true. All this was very crude. People did not ask themselves whether poetry and drama and legend and myth have not in other nations proved to be as potent vehicles of truth as historical fact. But we, in England especially, are a prosaic and unimaginative people. The credit of the Bible and with it the credit of religion was fundamentally shaken.

Meanwhile David Strauss had, in the most radical spirit, and with the most virulent animus against "priests" and churches, applied the mythical theory to the Gospels in his famous *Life of Christ* (1833); and shortly after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Renan (1863) published his much more attractive, but hardly less destructive, *Life of Jesus*. And Ferdinand Baur, the contemporary of Strauss between 1831 and 1860, elaborated the deeply destructive view of the New Testament literature which, as developed by "the school of Tübingen," became the main subject of intellectual controversy in theological circles for many years. But it is noticeable that in England certainly the work of Strauss and Renan never produced as much effect on the popular imagination as the criticism of the Old Testament. This was no doubt partly due to the fact that our great English scholars appeared to win a decisive victory over the destructive critics of the New Testament, whose theories they seemed to show to be uncritical and unconvincing. But whatever the cause, it is worth noticing that though the traditional view of the Old Testament and of the New was subject at the same time to attacks equally thorough, equally brilliant, and equally radical, it was mainly on the field of the Old Testament that the credit of the Bible suffered in popular imagination. The Old Testament had been the stronghold of Puritan religion. It was there especially that the Bible was supposed to have been proved to be untrue. It is only recently that " Modernist " views of the New Testament have come to dominate popular and journalistic literature, and have given us the kind of view of Christian origins which may be seen in Mr. Wells's *Outline of History*.

3. To these two great shocks to established religious beliefs must be added a third—less destructive, no doubt, but still seriously imperilling the popular view of divine revelation. I refer to the rise of the science of Comparative Religion. The cause of the evangelization of the heathen had not been a popular cause in the early nineteenth century, except in the circle of the strict Evangelicals. The popular distaste for it is expressed, in ways we are familiar with, by Thackeray and Dickens. But the hymn which told how " the heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone," expressed the current view of the non-Christian

religions. No doubt Judaism and Mohammedanism stood on a different basis, though Judaism had decisively missed its way and Mohammed was distinctively the False Prophet. But for the rest the religions of heathenism were supposed to be rationally beneath contempt. Macaulay, though he was very far from being an evangelical Christian, expressed with his usual force the common contemptuous estimate alike of the philosophy and the religions of India. But a quite different attitude of mind was represented by the new science of Comparative Religions, of which Max Müller was in England the most prominent representative. They were now studied as examples of the various forms which had been taken in different races by the fundamental instinct of religion in man. Behind their grosser popular forms Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and even the religion of savages became the subject of a respectful study, resulting sometimes in a positive enthusiasm for what had formerly seemed a repulsive superstition. Again I say, it is not my present business to seek to estimate the exact truth of the newer views now dominant. I only note the change and the effect of the change on the common belief in Revealed Religion. Though in fact the attitude of Britons in India and Africa, whether Government officials or traders, towards the natives and their religions remained very much as it was and very far below what was to be desired in the way of sympathy,[1] the world of educated people at home began to profess an even profound respect for the non-Christian faiths. It was agreed that religion was a universal need and characteristic of man, and that it had taken various forms according to the psychologies of various races and to their varying levels of culture. All religions, it would appear, were more or less inspired by the spirit of truth and more or less involved in error. The conclusion commonly suggested was that the distinctive and absolute claim made for the religion of the Bible would need to be very much toned down; and that, if there were to be a universal religion for our day or for the future, it must be one which would negate the exclusive claim of any one historical creed, but in which all alike could, in their real spirit, find themselves at home. "Religion," it has been recently said, "lives through the death of religions." [1] Thus the claim of the historical Christian creed to be the one divinely authorized religion which was to convert the world—being as light to darkness and knowledge to ignorance—came to be regarded as an old-fashioned claim which educated people could treat with contempt.

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[1] I ought, I think, to except Mohammedanism. The Mohammedan religion has apparently always obtained the instinctive sympathy of Englishmen.

4. The shocks to established beliefs which I have been enumerating arose from new discoveries or new sciences. But hardly less important among the causes of religious unsettlement was the revolt of the moral conscience—which in the middle of the last century, if it was singularly insensitive on some points, as for instance on the cruelties and injustices still involved in our industrial system, was acutely sensitive and insistent on others—against certain current doctrines of Christianity which are commonly, if not quite accurately, described as Calvinistic. The idea of absolute divine decrees condemning to eternal misery masses of men even before their birth—the

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[1] Kirsopp Lake's *Landmarks of Early Christianity* (Macmillan, 1920), p. 1.

teaching about the Atonement which represented God as content to punish the innocent in place of the guilty—the doctrine of an endless hell which was to be the lot of all who had not accepted a message which some of them had not even heard—such doctrines, which had no doubt been commonly preached from Christian pulpits for a long period, more or less suddenly began to produce a violent reaction. John Stuart Mill's famous protest, "I will call no being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures, and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go,"[1] represented a very widespread rebellion of conscience against everything in the current religious tradition which described the action of God as tyrannical, arbitrary and cruel. Of course it was largely an uninstructed protest. It did not recognize how much in the real Christian tradition was wholly on its side.[2] Of course also it was an unbalanced protest, and ran to foolish excesses, so that it became fashionable to represent God as if He were a merely good-natured being, and the moral law had no severity and no eternal and necessary sanction. Nevertheless it must be recognized that the current tradition of orthodox Protestantism had offended, at certain points even violently, the real conscience of men, and the revolt of outraged conscience reinforced the rebellion against orthodox tradition which had its source in the new sciences.

I have been seeking to explain the causes which, now more than two generations ago, brought about the breakdown of the religious tradition in Protestant England. Since that time many things have happened. New currents of thought and feeling have arisen and altered the general temper and opinion of our society on many subjects, so that the opinions of the Victorian Age have become almost a synonym for something old-fashioned and abandoned. Meanwhile, on the field of religion and theology a vast amount of work has been done on critical lines, in great part sane, illuminating, and reconstructive, so that on the whole—if scattered individuals could be taken together—there would be found to be a very strong body amongst us of rationally convinced believers in the Christian Creed. Popular religious movements, again, have been vigorously at work and have gathered and maintained in allegiance great groups of believers and worshippers. There is a widespread feeling in the country that nothing can take the place of the Christian religion and that we cannot do without it ; and there has arisen recently a widespread desire for religious unity, generally, however, accompanied by a great unwillingness to face the question of its intellectual basis. All these things have happened and have deeply altered the intellectual atmosphere. But one thing has not occurred. There has not been any restoration of the authority of religious tradition—that is, any restoration on a broad scale of the sense of security of belief or agreement in believing. Still, if you take any casual collection of twenty men and women, and have the opportunity of ascertaining their religious beliefs, you will find an extraordinary diversity and uncertainty among them.

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[1] J. S. Mill's *Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy*, 4th ed. p. 129.

[2] John Wesley's famous protest against Calvinism was not less impassioned than J. S. Mill's.

It is worth while noticing some of the characteristic features or causes of this present-day unsettlement, so far as it can be distinguished from what prevailed a generation or two ago.

1. The atmosphere of democracy possesses the intellectual world and takes the form of an almost unlimited assertion and recognition of the right of private judgement. For reasons only too evident within the Church, whether we are thinking of the Church of England or of the wider world of Christian belief, authority is discredited. "There is nothing," it is said with some reason, "which you may not hear denied or affirmed in the pulpits of the Church." Even the Catholic movement in the Church of England, which makes its special appeal to authority, has in fact maintained itself and spread largely by an appeal to the rights of congregations to worship and believe as they please. Now, the claim to an unlimited right to believe as one pleases is indisputable as a maxim of civil society; but there is an extraordinary lack of any balancing perception that morally the right of private judgement depends on the pains that have been taken to form the judgement by adequate and conscientious enquiry. Nevertheless, the claim prevails almost unchallenged.

2. Fifty years ago it used to be commonly held that, though there was great doubt about many established doctrines of the faith, there was, and would continue to be, almost complete agreement on the standard of Christian morality; but any such unreasonable expectation has been indeed rudely shattered. It must have been expressed originally in sublime unconsciousness that the whole industrial system, then in its glory, had been built up on a basis of profound revolt against the central law of Christian morality, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." There are few things in history more

astonishing than the silent acquiescence of the Christian world in the radical betrayal of its ethical foundation. But it is not only in the industrial world that there has been a rebellion against Christian moral principles. The same rebellion is evident to-day in every section of our society against the Christian standard of sexual morality, alike among the single and the married, and it is open and deliberate. Thus masses of men and women to-day are as much without any sense of a definite standard having divine authority in matters of conduct as in matters of creed.

3. This tendency to unlimited individualism, or to organized revolt from the long-accepted standards of religious and moral authority, has been accentuated by popular literature. Most people read little but novels and newspapers. Now, novels in England of recent years have been largely occupied with glorifying the revolt. Authority is represented as stupid. Passionate feeling is to have its own way. And the newspapers advertise every startling "new view," however intellectually worthless or unbalanced, simply because it is exciting and sells the newspaper, while the careful utterance of the sober thinker is passed by unreported.

4. Even the new and popular science of psychology, especially "the psychology of religious belief"—its intentions being, no doubt, misunderstood—is made to minister to the prevalent religious individualism or subjectivism. Experience, I suppose, may be properly defined to be reality as felt. The value of the feeling will thus be constantly estimated to depend upon its relation to objective reality. But psychology studies the feelings and movements of the soul without any regard to objective standards. Thus "experience" is taken to mean simply feeling, and

is valued in proportion as it is intense—often in proportion as it is abnormal and therefore specially interesting. Thus, the popular cry "Let us be our real selves" is taken to mean let us "remove inhibitions" and be our unrestrained selves. This is no doubt a parody of scientific psychology; but it appears to be a very popular parody, and I will quote, in confirmation of what I have said, the serious words of a well-known American psychologist, Professor J. B. Pratt:[1] "Psychology studies the *idea* of God and the *idea* of the solar system, and stops there. But neither astronomy nor theology means to limit our study to our ideas. They both mean to be objective—and it is hard to see why one should be denied this privilege, if it be granted to the other. And if objectivity be denied to theology, the dangers that inevitably result are evident. Theology becomes purely subjective—a description of the way we feel; the idea of God is substituted for God . . . and the psychology of religion, having absorbed all that was objective in religion, finds it has nothing left to study, or at best becomes a branch of abnormal psychology. 'This method,' writes Boutroux, 'if it succeed, will lead sooner or later to the abolition of the fact itself, while the dogmatic criticism of religions has striven in vain for centuries to obtain this result. . . . Contrary, then, to the other sciences which leave standing the things that they explain, the one just mentioned has this remarkable property of destroying its object in the act of describing it, and of substituting itself for the facts in proportion as it analyses them.'"

I think the language of both the above quotations is open to criticism. But their substantial meaning is plain and true.

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[1] The author of *The Psychology of Religious Belief* and *The Religious Consciousness* (Macmillan: New York). My quotation is from the latter work, p. 41.

5. In this confused world, thirsting alike for novelty and for assurance, there emerge " new religions," for instance, Christian Science, Theosophy, and (only so far as it has a special religious doctrine of its own) Spiritualism.[1] In their substance or basis they are not by any means new, but revivals of very old forms of religious belief, the first two strikingly recalling the features of ancient Gnosticism. If we examine the actual basis of their special propaganda, it appears to be extraordinarily untrustworthy and to make an inordinate claim on credulity. None the less they push their way widely amongst those who are rebels against the old-fashioned kinds of authority; they make converts, numerous, zealous, and proselytizing, and constitute a very distinctive feature in the mixed present-day world of religious opinions.

6. Finally, we must take note that the hope, widely entertained, that the trials, sacrifices, and agonies of the Great War would recall men to God—to a more vivid sense of His judgements and of their need of His mercy and protection, and so rally them to the faith of their fathers, to the old Christian Gospel, as the only really trustworthy basis for life—this hope has not apparently been fulfilled on any wide scale. On the contrary, the war and its experiences appear to have done a great deal to deepen doubts of the reality of divine love or the moral government of the world. It has weakened the Liberal faith in Progress without strengthening the faith in God. In the case of the most serious, it has left them perplexed; in

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[1] I desire to distinguish spiritualism as a religious propaganda from spiritualism so far as it means a scientific enquiry into psychical phenomena.

the mass, it has weakened idealism and deepened a cynical materialism—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Certainly, on the whole, it has left the youth of the country widely and deeply alienated from the Church and from organized religion.

. . . . .

It has seemed to me necessary, at starting, to attempt this sort of analysis of the causes which lie behind our present religious discontents and disorganization. Granted that the facts are, more or less, as I have represented them, and the causes such as I have described, the question arises—What is the remedy? And when we speak of the remedy, we are apt to imagine a remedy on a large scale. But I do not think that anything like religious recovery on a large scale is likely to occur at present. I agree with Dr. Tennant, who says, "As I have repeatedly emphasized, it looks as if for the present any universally [I would say "generally"] acceptable reconstruction of fundamental Christian doctrines is not feasible. We feel the need of it doubtless with some natural impatience; but perhaps all we can now do in that direction is to prepare for it." [1] And the best way to prepare for it is to clarify one's own mind. It is out of a reconstruction of belief in this or that man's own mind, or in the minds of small groups of men and women, that the larger reconstruction must be based.

I ask again then, What is the remedy for religious unsettlement and intellectual dissatisfaction in the individual? I leave for the present out of account those men and women who find it consistent with their conscience to refuse full intellectual enquiry into the difficult questions which haunt their imagination, and who provide for what appears to be the interest and peace of their souls by accepting passively the authority of the Church. I do not wish to criticize this procedure. But my conscience, and that of many others, will by no means admit of it. Granted the truth of the foundation doctrines of Christianity about God and about Christ and about His Spirit, and we see clearly enough that the question of authority—that is, the question of the truest or best form of the Christian religion—will become the most important question. But for me it is the foundation of all claims of Christian authority which is at stake. There is the first question. Till these foundation questions are settled, the claim of authority, especially as it actually presents itself in a divided Christendom, cannot suffice—cannot even explicitly enter. In the court of pure reason, where nothing is more sacred than free enquiry, we have heard the doubt, or more than the doubt, expressed by a long succession of serious and deep-thinking men, whether our foundations will bear investigation. We cannot put aside that claim for free enquiry, and to the limit of our power we must, for our own satisfaction, pursue it with the utmost impartiality possible.

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[1] F. R Tennant, "The Present Condition of Some Fundamental Christian Doctrines," in the *Constructive Quarterly*, Sept. 1920, p. 483.

Moreover, as has already been said, this is not only a matter for specialized experts or professional scholars. The discussion has been left in the past too much to them. Religion, after all, is for common men. It is in the region of the common reason, at least as much as in the circles of specialized study, that it must be judged. This is, most noticeably, the assumption of the New Testament. It appeals to the common judgement. It summons each man to judge for himself. "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man."[1] These words of our Lord and of St. Paul are a challenge to common men. We must brace ourselves individually and deliberately to the task of facing the intellectual questions and seeing if we cannot reach decisions—at least provisional decisions such as can be the reasonable basis, when put to account in life, of practical certainties.

Further, it is a quite unsatisfactory method to attack each particular problem, which happens to present itself or to be urged upon us, in isolation and at haphazard. We must train ourselves in thinking systematically.

I appeal, therefore, in this book to men and women of ordinary intelligence and education, discarding prejudices and arming themselves with nothing but the resolute determination to know and follow the truth, to begin with me at the beginning, and seek to build the fabric of a belief which they can feel in their conscience to be reasonable and convincing.

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[1] Luke xii. 57; 1 Thess. v. 21; 1 Cor. ii. 15.

Additional note, see p. 3. Mr. Bernard Shaw's Preface to his *Back to Methuselah* shows in striking and characteristic fashion how the triumphant Darwinism of the Mid-Victorian days misled the public, and how fallacious was the kind of belief in progress which it generated. The "orthodox" and highly dogmatic political economy was equally deceptive. Such provoking critics of the dominant intellectuals as Samuel Butler and John Ruskin have been justified.

CHAPTER II

THE CONDITIONS OF HOPEFUL RECONSTRUCTION

If a seriously minded person is determined to emerge from the confused condition of mind on matters of religion, the causes of which I have sought to describe, he does well, for the time at least, to forget all past controversies and, like René Descartes, "the father of modern philosophy," to begin at the beginning, and freeing himself, as far as may be, from prejudices and presuppositions, to lay the foundation of reasonable certitude and build upon it stage by stage.

No doubt this is not the way in which our convictions on religion or on most other subjects actually grow upon us. The genesis of convictions appears commonly to be as little as possible the result of rational processes. And there is often no order in them. There are people who believe passionately in the Church and the Sacraments, but appear to have a very slender and meagre belief in God.[1] This lack of order or proportion in our religious convictions is, in part, the reason why they are so easily thrown into confusion. But if we are seeking to reconstruct a rational fabric of beliefs, we must begin at the beginning; and there are certain qualities of mind which are, I think, essential.

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[1] I remember A. H. Mackonochie, that much-miscalled "Ritualist," saying in a sermon, somewhere about 1870, "There are people who believe in the blessed Sacrament, but do not seem to believe in Almighty God."

1. We must make ourselves as free as possible from the passions bred of antagonism and disappointment.

For instance, if a man has been brought up in the Church, and, as so frequently happens, has become "offended" with the Church, because he has found it, in this or that clergyman under whose ministry he has been, or whose words have been reported, or through the records of history, obscurantist in temper, and narrow and intolerant in spirit, or if he has seen it bearing no such witness as it ought to have borne against injustice and oppression, but leaguing itself with the forces of wealth and class selfishness—if something of this kind has happened, the "offended" person is commonly embittered and quite incapable of an unprejudiced judgement. Bishop Butler, in famous words, speaks of the attitude of the fashionable world in his day towards religion. "It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted, by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject for enquiry; but that it is, now at length, discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all persons of discernment; and nothing remained, but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world."[1] This demand for reprisals describes the attitude of a vast number of people in our own age. Their attitude towards the Church or towards orthodoxy is the attitude of those who would take reprisals on a weakened tyrant. In many cases it is, as in Butler's day, the Church as claiming of them a moral restraint which they have resolved to repudiate, which is chiefly in their mind. With the nobler sort the restraint they are repudiating is the claim laid upon free thought and democratic aspiration. But in either case the bitter desire to take reprisals on the Church is totally destructive of a calm and reasonable judgement. Everything that makes against the creed or moral standard of the Church is eagerly welcomed. What makes for it is ignored or despised. This is not reason, but the most deceptive of passions. Must we be for ever in reactions? Can we not at least recognize, as one of the most certain conclusions of history, that the best things, liberty and equality, no less than authority and inherited experience, are the most capable of dangerous abuse; but that the excesses and follies, whether of authority or liberty, are no evidence that there is not, behind the excesses and follies, a wisdom necessary for man? "La vérité," said Renan, "consiste dans les nuances." The method of "all or nothing" is of no account in the court of reason. There is no chance of finding truth, unless we seek calmly to estimate what is the solid rational strength which lies behind all that gives point and passion to the cry, "Tantum relligio potuit suadere malorum." Those who are plainly "out to score off" orthodoxy or, on the other hand, eager to show up "the bankruptcy" of science or criticism, can always do it easily enough, but the gain for truth or for real intellectual liberty is not considerable.

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[1] From the Advertizement to *The Analogy*.

2. Secondly, we ought to begin our search with a real determination, if possible, to reach at least a provisional decision. There are a vast number of questions on which this is rationally impossible, and

such questions no doubt abound in theology and philosophy. For there really are no sufficient grounds for a decision. But it is impossible to doubt that the merely "critical" temper of our day, or at a lower stage the temper of mere intellectual curiosity, is sceptical in the sense that it loves the process of enquiry for its own sake and has no real desire to draw a conclusion.[1] It does not see the practical importance of decision nor feel the responsibility of making up its mind. It finds each new view interesting. It never can say a decisive "no." It miscalls its state of mental indecision openmindedness. No doubt there are a vast number of questions, besides those which, owing to the limitations of human faculty, no man can decide, on which we as individuals are without the materials for forming a judgement. They are questions for specialists. We can but read the record of this learned man's opinion and that learned man's rebutter with a certain degree of interest. We are and must be only spectators of a conflict in which we cannot share. But with regard to moral and religious matters in the deepest sense, this cannot be so. They concern us vitally. Our manhood calls out for assurance, if we can reasonably have it. The popular suggestion that "it does not really matter so much what exactly a man believes" is a fallacy. However many instances we may find of beliefs that have no influence on conduct, of atheists who live as Christians and Christians who live as atheists, yet on a broad view of human nature, in the long reaches of human life, we cannot but see that how men and women behave depends on what they really believe about the unseen foundations of life, about God and duty, about heaven and hell.

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[1] There are famous instances of protests by great thinkers that the search for truth was to be preferred to the finding of it, but I believe that, at bottom, this state of mind represents a disease of the intellect.

It does not seem to me rational to doubt that the marked differences between the various civilizations or types of human society, which have been formed under the influence of the Jewish or the Christian or the Mohammedan or the Buddhist or the Brahman religion, have been due in very large measure to the differences in the beliefs about God and human destiny which underlie them. And what is true of nations or "crowds" is true also of individuals or the smaller and more consciously formed groups. I cannot imagine a man doubting this about himself, if he will be at pains to distinguish his real from his conventional creed. And what we are seeking for is a real creed—a real intellectual decision such as is formed to be acted upon.

Of course it is a betrayal of my rational nature to make premature decisions on inadequate grounds. But with regard to what really matters for human life, I must accept the challenge of the great masters of the human soul and determine to seek decisions, where decisions are rationally possible, and to test their validity by putting them to account in action. It is only in this way that decisions of a provisional nature can become permanent convictions.

No doubt we may form wrong decisions, and growing experience or growing knowledge may convince us of our mistake. Then we must go through the process which James Hinton used to describe as "correcting our premises." Nevertheless, it is better to make an intellectual decision or accept a creed on what seems to be the weight of the evidence on the whole, and to use it for all it is worth, and then, if need arise, revise it or even abandon it—if all this be done carefully and with all due consideration—than to remain for ever uncommitted and in suspense.

Nor must we suffer ourselves to be deluded or discouraged from thinking by what I may call the "pragmatist" argument—that it is only the "moral values" that really matter—that we can be certain about our moral duty and the conception of life which is involved in it, and that beyond this we may be indifferent to "metaphysics." For we cannot thus separate the moral from the intellectual or metaphysical question. As has already been said, the strain to-day for multitudes of men and women is especially upon the moral standard. Because it lacks the support of a clear faith, the moral standard either breaks down or becomes lowered to the level of popular opinion. To this extent certainly the mass of men are rational, that they want to know why they should pursue a difficult and, as it often appears, a solitary course of action, inconsistent equally with their apparent interests and the common opinion of their fellows. And in effect this means that they must have some sort of theology. No doubt their reason for assenting to their creed may be mainly the moral reason—the kind of reason which can be best expressed as the conviction that a belief which is necessary for a good life must be true or, as people say, "practically" true. This is an argument which we shall have to estimate later.[1] But whatever the reason which in their minds substantiates their personal creed, some sort of creed about God and their own soul individual men and women must have if they are to live by any standard better than that of public opinion; and, we may add, without a creed commonly accepted or at least held in reverence about God and the soul, the level of public moral opinion will be constantly degrading.

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[1] See pp. 111–12.

3. Thirdly, this capacity for reaching decision will need a frank recognition of the manifold grounds and methods of certainty. The methods of arriving at conclusions which is specially characteristic of science—what Darwin called "the grinding of general laws out of observed instances"[1]—is a part of the operations of the human mind in gaining truth which it would be impossible to ignore and difficult to overestimate, but we cannot recognize in it the whole of our resources. Consider the great artists. They convey to us truth about the universe which we are maimed beings if we do not recognize, but which is apprehended and conveyed and appreciated through methods wholly different from the methods of scientific reasoning, and which scientific reasoning can neither reach nor communicate. William de Morgan[2] describes in a wonderful passage the effect of a sonata of Beethoven on a man without special musical gifts or knowledge in an hour of desolation and despair. It reasoned with him, after its manner. It conveyed to him reassurance which nothing else could convey. "I have ever since regarded the latter [Beethoven] as not so much a Composer as a Revelation." "How often have I said to myself after some perfectly convincing phrase of Beethoven, 'Of course, if *that* is so, there can be no occasion to worry.' It could not be translated, of course, into vulgar grammar or syntax; but it left no doubt on the point, for all that." Those who have any appreciation of music,

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[1] Of course, even the physical sciences owe very much to prophetic intuitions.

[2] *Joseph Vance*, pp. 404–7.

however deficient in musical science, must feel after long listening to Beethoven what this means. He conveys to us a temper of mind, almost a philosophy —though not such as can be made directly articulate in intellectual propositions. It is by feeling or intuition that this supreme artist gains his profound vision of experience and of God. But it seems to me quite impossible to deny that it is insight into reality, the sort of insight which at bottom involves a philosophy of rational meaning or purpose in the universe. "The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know."

The same claim must be made on behalf of the intuitions of the poets, the prophets, and the mystics in the most general sense—I mean the religious souls who have a clear intuition of God and live in communion with Him. All these classes of persons, who have played so vast a part in the history of mankind, are convinced of some kind of reality—some law or aspect or controlling spirit of the universe which is to them the most certain of realities; and this conviction of theirs has been reached often in utter scorn of reasoning, or at any rate not by its methods.[1]

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[1] Cf. *The Sadhu*, by Canon B. H. Streeter and Mr. A. I. Appasamy. This account of a still living Indian Christian mystic is of deep interest. We may doubt his particular conclusions. I am not now concerned with these. All that I am concerned to insist is that the method of intuition is, as much as the method of scientific induction, a method of arriving at truth about the universe. We should note that the mystics differ from the prophets in this respect: that the latter tell us *about* God—they have a definite message about His will or character to deliver to men, of the truth of which we must judge; but the former, for the most part, are impressive not for what they tell us about God, but simply by the intensity with which they feel and see God in all things and all things in God.

Now it is quite obvious that such "intuitions" and "experiences" may be really quite unworthy of the names they claim. And the message of the prophets or seers may be quite contradictory. In fact they often are. We say, "They cannot all be true." For intuition means insight into reality, and experience properly means reality as felt. But the most masterful convictions reached by the power of emotion in the human soul may be pure delusions—they may correspond to nothing in the realities of the world. It would be only too easy to prove this proposition. And in these days, when every one talks about psychology, there is, as has been already said, a seriously dangerous tendency to attach so much importance to states of mind as to forget that the value of the subjective depends wholly at the last resort upon its correspondence with the objective.

It is very difficult to state precisely the tests which are to enable us to discriminate between intuition of reality and delusive imagination. Two of the most important of such tests are, no doubt, (1) that the spiritual intuition of the prophet or mystic or poet should be found in experience to give to those who accept it, and that over long periods of time and a wide range of humanity, a new power in life, as, for example, Mohammed's intuition of the One God and His will brought a startling degree of new life into the Arab races. This we believe can only have been because he had perceived some vital truth of fact, however much fanaticism or error may have been mixed up with his message. And (2) that the spiritual intuitions of the mystic, when translated, as they must be, into propositions for the intellect, should show themselves either capable of harmonization with all that, by other faculties, men have discovered about the universe in a consistent unity, or at least, if complete synthesis is beyond us, should not be in plain discrepancy with our knowledge as a whole.

I am aware that this demand for agreement, or at least absence of plain discrepancy, between the conclusions which, on different grounds, we are led to form needs to be pressed with much caution. I gather that Sir William Bragg, in his recent Boyle Lecture, has called attention within the region of physics to the discrepancy between the apparent intellectual postulate of the explosive action of electrons, suggesting something like Newton's corpuscular theory, and the "firmly established" wave theory of the transference of energy, and added these suggestive words, "We are obliged to use each theory as occasion demands and wait for further knowledge as to how it may be possible that both should be true at the same time. Toleration of opinion is a recognized virtue. The curiosity of the present situation is that opposite opinions have to be held or used by the same individual in the faith that some day the combined truth may be made plain."[1] If this is a rational attitude, as I think it is, towards discrepant theories within the region of the same science, much more may it be rational within the wide compass of the whole of our knowledge. The "doctrine of relativity" in its broadest sense—that is, the recognition that our best theories or explanations of the universe cannot express absolute truth, but only the best measure of truth attainable by us with our limited vision—makes us no doubt tolerant of apparent discrepancies between our conclusions in one department of knowledge and experience and our conclusions in another.

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[1] See *The Times* report of Sir William Bragg's recent Robert Boyle Lecture, Friday, May 13, 1921.

Nevertheless, there is a tendency in philosophy to-day, and not only among pragmatists,[1] to carry the toleration of contradictory theories to a point which seems to me to subvert rationality altogether. It is surely of the essence of reason to demand synthesis. It may be necessary to entertain contradictory theories simultaneously, at least for a time, where different classes of fact seem to force them upon us, but at least this should cause in our minds "a pressing uneasiness" and not be allowed to subvert the essential rational demand for a consistent universe.

But I am not now attempting to devise tests to discriminate the real from the delusive either in the reasonings or intuitions of mankind. All that I am now contending for is what artists and prophets and mystics have always insisted upon, and what the rising science of psychology is pressing upon us, not without perilous excess—viz. that if we want to reach the whole truth, so far as we can, concerning the world we live in, we must trust the whole of our faculties—not our powers of abstract reasoning only, or only our powers of scientific discovery higher or lower, but also the more emotional and active powers of our nature—its capacities for intuition and feeling and willing. Anyone, in fact, who examines himself must almost certainly reach the conclusion that a great proportion of the convictions of his own mind, such as he would find it impossible to repudiate without repudiating his humanity, and impossible even to doubt without being self-convicted of treason against the good, have been arrived at by feeling; whether it be by a moral or religious tradition being verified and approved in his own conscience and experience, or by some feeling being aroused in himself individually and acted upon, and not by any process of reasoning. This means, on the broadest scale, that feeling, generating an inward vision of reality, or intuition—which is faith of a sort, because it runs ahead of all reasoning and even resents its interference—is a large part in our human equipment as searchers after truth and reality. It is quite compatible with such a fundamental respect for feeling and conscience to admit that the conclusions of science must be allowed to correct the rashness or crudeness of the convictions which conscience and feeling suggest, just as, on the other hand, conscience and feeling must be allowed to enlarge the narrowness of the outlook of science or ratiocination. The point is that the whole of our mental or spiritual capacities must be trained and brought into exercise if we are to be true to the whole of reality.

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[1] The language of Dr. Bradley, for instance, surely is somewhat reckless, e.g. "Is there any need for our attempt to avoid self-contradiction ?" (*Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 430, cf. index under heading "Consistency").

The co-operation and interaction of our different capacities may be made clearer by two illustrations.

(1) The *Confession* of Leo Tolstoy,[1] surely among the most moving of modern documents, though neither our feeling nor our reason may accept all his conclusions, yet suggests convincingly one thing at least—how reasoning and feeling combine and intertwine in all genuine search for the truth, feeling insisting on reopening questions which reasoning had sought to close, sometimes gaining the victory over reasoning, sometimes corrected by reasoning, but always, so to speak, intervening, if reasoning is to be kept from losing itself in vacancy or self-despair.

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[1] *A Confession*, trans. by Aylmer Maude (Oxford Univ. Press).

Finally, it appears, the ground of all sane theory seemed to Tolstoy to be the feeling for the good life, the recognition of it when we see it, and the assurance that it must be worth while to live it, and that it must turn out to be in accordance with right reason.

(2) My point could also be happily illustrated by many of us from intimacy with scientific men who are also unashamedly religious men. We must acknowledge that almost exclusive preoccupation with scientific enquiries tends to generate a disinclination for, or a distrust of, the methods of the mystic or the poet or the ordinary religious man—the methods by which religious convictions are usually arrived at and exercised. Thus it is not surprising that many scientific men are agnostics and some proclaim their agnosticism. All exclusive preoccupation with one kind of mental activity, whatever it be, is a specializing of the mind which tends to narrowness. Instances would be easy to give from many quarters. But this narrowness is not characteristic of all scientific men. Thus George Romanes bore witness that of the brilliant galaxy of mathematicians who were the glory of Cambridge about 1870–80 the majority were orthodox in religion[1]—doubtless neither because of, nor in spite of, their scientific insight, but because they were something else besides scientific men. In a somewhat later generation Pasteur, though perhaps the most eminent among scientific men who were also professing Christians, would by no means stand alone with his frank declaration of a childlike faith in the Catholic religion, again doubtless neither because of his science nor in spite of it, but by the exercise of faculties which science barely uses

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[1] Romanes, *Thoughts on Religion* (Longmans), pp. 137–8.

or for its own specific purposes excludes. Once in my life I have been privileged to know an able young scientific man who went almost at a bound from somewhat polemical agnosticism to a whole-hearted faith, through an experience of mental agony which seemed to open to him new windows to reality. He did not find his new faith interfere with his science or restrain it. He was free as ever to pursue his special career. But he was more of a man. His humanity was fuller, because he had learned that man does not know by scientific investigation only.

In all this plea for breadth in the consideration of the grounds of certitude I have used language about "faculties" or "capacities"—reason and feeling and will—in every man, such as experience, I think, suggests or requires. We are intensely conscious of such distinct faculties and of their conflict within us. In one department of our life there is more claim upon our will, in another upon our good feeling or conscience, in another upon our powers of reasoning. Again, one person is distinguished by a vigorous will but deficient in feeling or intelligence, and another appears to be all intellect, and another "all heart and no head." And in each of us heart and head, or conscience and will, are apt to be in violent discord. Nevertheless any deep view of personality or any sound psychology suffices to convince us that, however mysterious the interaction of our faculties, or however intense at times the consciousness of distraction and conflict, yet in fact they are but movements of the same self.[1] The root of all is the common vital movement of self-realization—the conative movement—which in man expresses itself as will and emotion and rational concept: "will" and "emotion" being distinguished from animal instinct just in proportion as they either pass into or presuppose rational concepts and theories and convictions, and thereby gain consistency and power. Our rational or argumentative powers only emerge as an element in the whole conative movement of our personality asserting itself. Thus no theory of the world can claim to be the truth for a man which either ultimately tends to paralyse his will or quench his feeling or baffle his reason. For these qualities, taken altogether and not apart, are the expression of his fundamental self.

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[1] It was the merit of Tertullian (*de Anima*, 18), at a time when Christianity was emphasizing the unity of human personality, that he made a strong protest against the tendency of the philosophers to distinguish human faculties as if they were different entities—"Non enim et sentire intelligere est et intelligere sentire est ?" etc.

I know that some who read this will be disposed to feel that, having begun by asking for a temper of mind freed from disturbing prejudices, I am now allowing the calm reason to be flooded with prejudices bred of will or emotion. But in fact we are bound to discriminate between "prejudice" in its etymological sense and in its popular sense. In the latter sense it means a condition of our judgement or intelligence in which we refuse to open our minds to disagreeable facts or to allow them to have weight with us. It is a fixed, unprogressive and narrow condition of mind, and it must be got rid of. But there is another sense in which we are normally born with "prejudgements" implicit in us—as that right is better than wrong or beauty than ugliness. These implicit prejudgements appear to belong to our unconscious self in a measure, and they are strengthened by our training and our experience. It is idle to demand that we should be free of them. They are behind our coldest reasonings as evidently as behind our most emotional or wilful movements. What we can do is faithfully to bring our prejudices into the clearest light and subject them to all the corrective discipline of experience. So we can get rid of disturbing prejudices and come into the fullest possible correspondence with the large truth of things, as it appears to be. But we cannot get out of ourselves, and certain prejudgements are implicit in human personality.[1]

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Now with this amount of preface as to the temper and method which our attempt to reconstruct belief from its foundations demands of us, let us enter upon our enquiry at its most fundamental stage—let us investigate the grounds of a belief in God.

[1] There is an admirable account of the function of education in relation to prejudice in Plato's *Republic*, book iii, 401.

CHAPTER III

GROUNDS OF BELIEF IN GOD

We approach the fundamental question of belief in God. It will speedily appear, I think, that the most pressing question is not whether we can believe in God, but of what sort the God is in whom we can or must believe. Atheism is very rare, and agnosticism is a question of degree.[1] In some sense we must all be agnostics, inasmuch as, on all showing, God passes our understanding. The important question is: how much can we know or rationally believe about God? Nevertheless we must not hurry forward, but ask first whether belief in God at all is reasonable, and, if so, why.

Fundamentally to disbelieve in God—to be an atheist—means, I suppose, that we see in the world of which we form a part no signs of anything corresponding to the mind or spirit or purpose which indisputably exists in man—no signs of a universal spirit or reason with which we can hold communion, nothing but blind and unconscious force. And conversely what we mean by Theism or belief in God in its most general form is the recognition about us, within us and above us, of a universal and eternal reason or purpose, with which we can and ought to correspond.

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[1] See Pringle Pattison, *Idea of God*, p. 166.

This fundamental alternative was stated by the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius, long ago in words of which we still feel the momentous seriousness :

> " The world is either a welter of alternate combination and dispersion, or a unity of order and providence. If the former, why do I care about anything else than how I shall at last become earth ? But on the other alternative I feel reverence, I stand steadfast, I find heart in the power that disposes all." [1]

Now, in earlier ages mankind has been found believing in many gods, or in two original spiritual principles or gods, the one good and the other evil, which are at conflict in the universe. This latter belief, which we call dualism, is so congruous with part of our experience, both within ourselves and without ourselves, that it is always reviving. Nevertheless I think that, like polytheism properly so-called, it is rationally impossible for us to-day. The science of nature has demonstrated the absolute unity of nature. Good and evil, as we know them in experience, mind and matter, the world of moral purpose and the world of material things, are not the product of two separate original forces. They are knit into one another as phases in one whole, results of one force, one system of interconnected law. The universe, material and spiritual, is, as Spinoza said, one and (in some sense) of one substance ; and God, if there be a God, in part manifest and in part concealed in nature, is one only. Long before the days of modern science in fact, and quite apart from Jewish or Christian influences, the brooding mind of man had felt the unity in things, and behind the "gods many" of popular belief, had been feeling its way to the oneness of God.[1]

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[1] *Meditations*, vi. 10. I take the translation, which gives the sense clearly, almost unchanged from Pringle Pattison.

Again, to-day a new dualism or pluralism is raising its head. Mr. H. G. Wells and other prophets of the day are calling us to believe in a God who is very far indeed from being the Creator of the universe or the Spirit of the universe. The Power behind the world is inscrutable. It may be cruel or merely unconscious. But we can believe in a good God who has some power, though He is very far from being almighty, and whom we, by co-operating with Him, can help to become more powerful. Now, if this God, who is not the power behind nature, is anything more than a name for the aspirations of men—if He is declared to be a real Being, with mind and purpose—the idea seems to me to be purely mythological. The only power which holds me and all things in its grasp is the one all-pervading force of universal nature. There is no room for any other, unless it be for dependent spirits, dependent upon it. There can be no rivalry with the one and the ultimate and the all-embracing. All comes from it and must end in it. If this Power be the good God, I can have a rational religion. But any suggestion of a Being independent of it seems to me to be the language of a dream. The early Christian poet invoked God as "the persistent energy of things" —"Deus rerum tenax vigor." If this persistent energy of things be indeed God, all is well. But in any case, it is that alone in which we live and move and have our being.

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[1] It was, however, hampered by the prevailing dualism. In this connexion, I think, Irenaeus, the Christian Father of the second century, is an often disparaged man. If I am not mistaken, he saw deep into current controversies, and successfully emancipated the Christian mind from some of the clinging misconceptions which haunted the philosophy inherited from Greece. Thus to him we owe the first clear affirmation, as far as I know, of three important principles.

1. That no fundamental antagonism exists, or can be tolerated in idea, between spirit and matter, for the whole universe is "of one substance," as coming from one God, and "the Word has been made flesh." This principle of Christian faith and philosophy is constantly reasserted by Irenaeus, and it is one of the central certainties of modern science. It is our deliverance from Greek dualism.

2. That the method of God in creation and redemption is a method of gradual and progressive advance. Here also Irenaeus asserted again and again an important principle. He substituted the idea of progressive development from lower to higher, from the material to the spiritual, for the later Hellenic idea of emanations from the Absolute and the divine, each lower than that which preceded it.

3. He also borrowed from someone whom he does not name the assertion that the reason why all things in God's world are in measure, order, and number is because God Himself is not infinite in the sense of being indeterminate or capable of anything; measure or order lies in the eternal being of God—the relationship of the Father to the Son—immensus Pater in Filio mensuratus: mensura enim Patris Filius (iv. 4^2).

What grounds are there, for us men to-day, for believing that the Universal Power is God? Perhaps the grounds of such belief cannot be better expressed in summary than in the verses—in this case, it must be admitted, the very blank verses—of Wordsworth's Preface to the "Excursion":

> "My voice proclaims
> How exquisitely the individual mind
> (And the progressive powers perhaps no less
> Of the whole species) to the external world
> Is fitted:—and how exquisitely too—
> Theme this but little heard of among men—
> The external world is fitted to the mind;
> And the creation (by no lower name
> Can it be called) which they with blended might
> Accomplish."

Let us pursue this line of thinking.

1. Reason is that in us which demands sequence, regularity, and order in things. It resents mere accident and chance occurrence.[1] It could, in fact, only exist in a *cosmos*, i.e. an orderly world. And such a *cosmos* it finds from the first in sun and moon, in plant and animal, but mixed as it appears with what is incalculable and purely capricious—that is, irrational. But the more it knows, the more ground it finds for confidence that the appearance of capriciousness is due only to its ignorance. Nature, it grows to believe, is, in this sense, rational through and through, that it corresponds to this fundamental demand of reason for law and order in all things. This faith in a universal order—a faith continually more and more fully justified—is what makes science possible; and philosophy accompanying or anticipating science finds in this response of nature to the demand of reason the irresistible evidence of a universal reason or mind, ensouling nature, of which the reason or mind in us is the offspring or outcome, participating in and co-operating with the universal reason. This belief in the universal reason, with which our reason holds communion, was the Theism or belief in God of the educated world into which Christianity came. This, it was recognized, is the divine Being in which "we live and move and are." Of this divine Being we, as rational beings, are in a special sense "the offspring."[2]

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[1] Originally, no doubt, it was the apparently arbitrary element in experience which suggested belief in gods—powerful but capricious beings. Nevertheless some law or principle of dealing with these fearful beings must be discovered. And the sense of order and law gains upon the sense of arbitrariness.

[2] Acts xvii. 28. This is what St. Paul in his argument with the men of Athens can take for granted. So contemporary literature abundantly witnesses.

This argument (if it is to be called an argument, or this almost irresistible impression made upon us by the world) is the more popular form of what is called the epistemological argument—the argument, that is, from the analysis of knowledge. If we are at pains to analyse the most elementary kind of knowledge, our knowledge of external objects, trees and houses, chairs and tables, we discover, to our surprise and perhaps annoyance, that it is not the case, as we had supposed, that the world of objects is presented to us through our senses of touch and taste and sight and hearing, as it were, ready made. To constitute an object in a world of objects there is needed a mind to hold together in permanent relation the materials of colour, pressure, sound, and smell which come to us through our senses. Only for such a perceiving, relating, remembering mind can a concrete object or world of objects exist. Mind, it appears, is necessary for its constitution. What sort of world a dog or a dragon-fly sees we cannot tell. But whatever it sees is, we must suppose, what its special soul or mind constitutes for it out of the materials which its senses supply to it.

This fact (for such it appears to be) has sometimes been represented by "subjective idealists" as if it meant that my mind is the maker of my world. But this is plainly contradictory to the ultimate certainty of common sense, which assures me that the world is presented to me, not made by me. The very suggestion of the opposite has made philosophy ridiculous. Also it is not what the analysis of the rudimentary act of knowledge would really suggest. Whatever the mind in me does, it does in absolute dependence upon and subordination to what is supplied to it in sensations—not only the sensations as isolated facts, but their impact upon us in a certain regularity of succession or simultaneity. The constructive work of my mind is absolutely dependent upon what it receives—the subjective process upon the data supplied. Thus I need have no fear that philosophy is so absurd as to suggest a doubt that the external world is independent of me or the myriad other individual minds. But what it does suggest to me, or even force upon me, is that the reality of an ordered world can exist only for mind and in terms of mind. There seems to be no way of escaping this conclusion. The real world of a fly or a dog—whatever it may be—requires the mind of a fly or a dog for its existence. The man's world of fuller reality requires the man's mind. The whole of the world-reality in all its fullness and complexity postulates a universal and perfect mind, which (whether it is to be represented as its Creator or as its soul) would be instinctively called divine. And it is this divine mind which is communicating with me through all the process of sensitive experience. In knowing more about the world I am learning about God.

At least since the great days of Greece the philosophers and the poets of the human race have been, on the whole, constantly engaged in reinforcing this conviction, that you must interpret the material world in terms of mind or spirit, and not mind or spirit in terms of matter or physical force. Mind has the making of things, and without creative mind they could not be.

In reasserting this old idealist argument, I know that I am challenging the New Realists. Thus Dr. Alexander says in his Gifford Lectures[1]:

"The effect of the empirical method in metaphysics is seriously and persistently to treat finite minds as one among the many forms of finite existence, having no privilege among them except such as it claims from its greater perfection of development. Should enquiry prove that the cognitive faculty is unique, improbable as such a result might seem, it would have to be accepted faithfully and harmonized with the remainder of the scheme. But *prima facie* there is no warrant for the assumption, still less for the dogma, that because all experience implies a mind, that which is experienced owes its being and its qualities to mind. Minds are but the most gifted members known to us in a democracy of things."

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[1] *Space, Time, and Deity* (Macmillan, 1920), vol. i, p. 6.

This attempt to treat minds as simply things seems to me blankly impossible. It is not, I think, an assumption or a dogma that "things," that is, an ordered world, involve and presuppose mind. It is the inevitable conclusion of the first analysis of common experience.[1] I must profess that the epistemological argument does seem to me irresistible, when it claims our recognition of Mind as necessary for a world; and when it bids us feel ourselves in the mere act of perceiving a world of ordered objects brought into some sort of communion with this Mind which is in all things.

2. To some of us the form in which this kind of argument presents itself with the greatest force is what we may call the argument from beauty. Evolutionists have attempted to show that beauty in animals can be accounted for without the assumption of any "intention" of being beautiful in nature simply by the fact that beautiful beings—especially the males—have an advantage in the struggle for existence, and that beauty has thus a survival value,

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[1] The new realists are involved, I think, in a further difficulty when they postulate the existence of universals independently of minds: see Haldane, *Reign of Relativity* (Murray), pp. 133, 265, etc.

because the qualities which give beauty to males attract the other sex. Among all the occurring varieties the more beautiful would, therefore, without any intention on the part of nature, tend to propagate their species, and the less beautiful to perish. I believe that the biologists are using this argument to-day with much more hesitation than Charles Darwin. Sexual selection on account of beauty has a measure of truth, it seems, but there is fair certainty that Darwin gave it far too great an extension. Moreover, how are we to account for the basis of this theory, viz. the existence in the universal female of a consistent æsthetic standard? But I do not want to pause over an argument with which I have not the exact knowledge to deal. Because, in any case, it has no application to inorganic nature, and that is enough for me. How shall we account for the beauty of inorganic nature—for the glory of the sea, for the majesty of mountains, for the exquisite beauty of nature's lines, for the splendour and delicacy of sunsets, for the loveliness of clouds, for the music of sounds, for the fascination of motions and colours and shapes? On the largest scale we must confess that "nature all the time that it is working as a machine is also sleeping as a picture." [1] All this has no connexion with utility or survival value. And certainly, if any other quality in things is objective—in whatever sense the reality and qualities of natural objects are prior to the perceiving mind in man—beauty is so. It forces itself and impresses itself upon us. And we cannot conceive it to be accidental. Our reason insists that there is in nature an intention of being beautiful—we cannot call it anything else—long prior to the existence of man in the world, which man first had the faculty to appreciate; or, in other words, that there is a spirit of beauty in the universe which communicates with and corresponds with the faculty of beauty in man. And if this argument is irresistible in inorganic nature, then it extends itself inevitably over the field of vegetable and animal life, whatever the methods by which beauty there develops. This argument also, in one form or another, seems to me overwhelming. I cannot resist this—

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[1] From Mozley's *University Sermons*—the wonderful sermon on nature which everyone ought to read.

> "sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
> And the round ocean and the living air
> And the blue sky, and in the minds of man—
> A motion and a spirit which impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."[1]

3. In the conception of beauty we are introduced to something which not merely exists, but indicates a special purpose in the material world and has a special "value." All things are not beautiful. Ugly things exist, and in part must exist as the accompanying condition of the beautiful things, as the glacier could not exist without its disfiguring moraine. But beautiful things are "worth" more than others. And in some degree beauty lays on us, as free agents who have to do with the making of nature, a sense of duty. We *ought* to cultivate beauty. To deface nature is, we feel, an outrage. But this sense of absolute value and the accompanying sense of purpose and duty are conveyed far more strongly by our moral experiences. For most of us the strongest argument

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[1] Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey."

for God is the argument from conscience to a righteousness which is absolute and divine.

The moral sense, individual and social, in mankind—the sense of right or wrong—exhibits as varied and in many respects as obscure a history as any element in civilization or any mental or spiritual quality in man. But the rudeness of early beginnings, the gross misdirections, the strange perversions, the extraordinary variations, observable in the moral sense, as it appears in history, are equally observable in the faculty of reasoning and the sense of beauty. Whether the selfish instinct of self-preservation, coupled with the group instinct, which is altruistic, in the animals no less than in man, can account for the beginnings of morality is a question which at present we may pass by. For we are absolutely certain that in the highest specimens of our race, and under their leadership in the average good man of our experience, the sense of right or wrong has grown distinct from the sense of individual interest or social pressure, and has become what finds classical expression in the Antigone of Sophocles, or in the meditations of the Stoics, or in the minds of the Jewish prophets, or in the philosophy of Kant, or in Wordsworth's Hymn to Duty—the consciousness of being in the presence of a something not ourselves, a greater than ourselves, something of absolute value, an authoritative and superhuman law of righteousness, a categorical imperative—"thou shalt" or "thou shalt not"—laid upon man, which makes a peremptory claim upon his obedience, whatever be the pleasure or pain consequent to him upon the performance of his obligation. It is, I claim, an irresistible conclusion that here, where this is recognized, that is, in the higher regions of human experience, whatever may have been the dark animal or tribal origins of this majestic faculty, lies its real meaning and interpretation. It is incontestable that the glory and dignity of humanity depend upon, and are bound up with, the recognition of the supremacy of the moral ideal or law at a point where it has risen above, or distinguished itself from, social exigencies or personal advantages. Here, first, and here alone, where conscience recognizes its spiritual subordination to an eternal righteousness, claiming its glad obedience and co-operation, is the home of the moral freedom in which we recognize our true being. Such a belief in an Absolute Right is consistent, history shows us, with a very inadequate recognition (or none at all) of a personal God. It may, and sometimes does in fact consist (illogically as it would appear) with explicit atheism. But it cannot be given fair expression except by the recognition that right and wrong is no mere outgrowth of human interests or the necessities of human society. If it emerges out of these, it gains its true character only so far as it transcends them. It involves the recognition of the morally right as a quality of absolute value, which imposes itself on man absolutely because he is rational and spiritual. It cannot be interpreted as a merely human quality. Thus we are bound to conclude that the ordered world, of which man is only a part, contains or involves this quality of eternal righteousness. Like reason itself, of which it is an aspect, like beauty, so righteousness belongs to the universal and eternal Being, and, because this is so, men have called this Being God, and worshipped it.[1]

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[1] The above argument, in its three divisions, here very summarily treated, may be found, underlying their many differences, in most of

Here, in the moral region, very much more than in the region of beauty, we are encompassed with the sense of what *ought* to be. Moral goodness exists, but under conditions of continual and sometimes desperate struggle, and in each individual with more or less of manifest imperfection. But whatever its struggles and imperfections, goodness, we are convinced, is what ought to be. It represents the purpose of the world for free personalities. Whatever else the world may be, it is, in the region covered by the existence of persons, a "vale of soul-making," as Keats called it, a scene for the making of character and goodness under conditions of severest trial. And we find ourselves, in spite of appearances, impelled to believe that the moral purpose of the world, in general and in particular persons, is *intended to* gain the victory. This is the ground of the strong conviction of our moral consciousness that our best aspirations are not kindled in us only to be baffled and defeated. The great world-force, which over vast areas of the universe appears so wholly indifferent to moral considerations, here seems unmistakably to disclose a mind and purpose making for righteousness, though it must be admitted that the disclosure seems often in experience painfully ambiguous and embarrassed.

So far we are taken by the general trend of contemporary philosophy, and we feel the ground secure under our feet. But of course it will be said, we have reached here no more than "the higher pan-

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our recent philosophers. Perhaps the best recent books to which to refer a would-be student are Dr. Pringle Pattison's *Idea of God* (Oxford, 1917), and Dr. Sorley's *Moral Values and the Idea of God* (Cambridge, 1918)—an extraordinarily impressive book—also Lord Haldane's *Reign of Relativity* (Murray, 1921).

theism " [1]—the recognition in the world, of which we are a part, of spiritual qualities and values, and what we cannot but call spiritual purpose, with which as spiritual beings, rational, beauty-loving, and moral, we are called to co-operate, and which as eternal and universal spirit we are moved to worship. This is the immanent God—God in all things and in us.

Well, if this belief and accompanying worship is no more than pantheism, let us be at least pantheists. And let us recognize that, to this spiritual interpretation of nature, the scientific view of the world, which since the days of Darwin has become approximately universal, offers no sort of hindrance. Science bids us contemplate an age-long process by which, out of some original elements and conditions, to us but dimly imaginable, there was evolved a universal order, and out of the inorganic order life and the forms of life, vegetable and animal, and out of the animal creation rational man. We shall not, if we are wise, lay stress on the gaps in the scientific story of creation, or build on the conviction that living matter could not have been evolved out of what had no life, or rationality out of animal mind. But what we shall claim is that the fact that living beings and spiritual beings emerged in an age-long process out of a world which was lifeless and without any spiritual consciousness in itself, does not mean that life and spirit can be interpreted in terms of material force and chemical change, as if they were nothing more. The opposite is the case. Rather it is the flower and fruit of nature which interpret the seed from which it springs. When mind in man emerges in the process of creative evolution, then, and only then, does the secret of nature begin to be recognized. "Man is organic to nature."[1] The reason in man discovers the rational in nature; the sense of beauty in man finds itself in presence of the universal beauty; the conscience in man finds itself in presence of an eternal righteousness. The conclusion is forced upon us that instead of interpreting mind in terms of matter, you must interpret the whole process of physical evolution in terms of that in which it culminates, that is, mind. Here first we see what it all meant and whither it was all tending. Thus are we led to see the quality of spirit, that is, mind and purpose, in the first beginnings of the material world. That is, in some sense, we are led to believe in God.

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[1] Dr. Inge (*Personal Idealism*, p. 43) would restrict the name Pantheist to "those who hold that God is present *equally* in every part of His creation," equally in rational man and in the clods, and thereby abolish all sense of " values "—all sense of higher and lower, or of an ascending scale in nature as God is more fully revealed. But it is more in accordance with general usage and with the facts of the case to speak of Pantheism higher and lower, and to reckon as Pantheists all who recognize a spirit immanent and operative in nature, but not, as far as they can see, independent of it or transcending it.

M. Henri Bergson is no doubt at many points open to criticism. But he seems to me to have given effective expression to a set of ideas which are destined to dominate. "I see in the whole evolution of life on our planet a crossing of matter by a creative consciousness, an effort to set free, by force of ingenuity and invention, something which in the animal still remains imprisoned, and is only finally released when we reach man."[2]

I think it must be said that in the fundamental conflict between materialism—which would explain spirit in terms of matter, because the material appears before the spiritual and the spiritual emerges out of it—and the spiritual interpretation of nature—which insists that the orderly evolution which ends in spiritual beings also presupposes spirit and spiritual purpose—in that philosophical conflict materialism has been shown to be untenable. I think it is true to say further that in the two generations full of constant discussion which have now passed since Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared, the idea that the world of organized life can be accounted for by nothing but "natural selection" and "sexual selection" acting upon the material supplied by chance variations has become less and less probable.[1] Grant to these agencies all the force they can be allowed to have had, it seems impossible to account for progressive evolution of living forms unless some sort of direction, some sort of organic tendency to become this or that, is assumed in nature—which suggests irresistibly a progressive purpose in the world of living things, which has found for the present its culmination and interpretation in man. In fact, we are driven back for our interpretation of nature upon the principle first clearly enunciated by Aristotle that the essence of anything, or its real meaning, is only manifest when it has reached its full growth. We are to interpret the beginning in the light of the end; not the end in the light of the beginning.[2]

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[1] The argument will be found in Pringle Pattison's book just referred to, cap. viii, and in many other recent thinkers.

[2] See *Mind Energy* (*L'Energie Spirituelle*), by H. Bergson, trans. by Prof. H. Wildon Carr (Macmillan, 1920), p. 18, cf. p. 25.

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[1] In this connection I cannot but call attention to what has been, I think, a neglected work, J. N. Spearman's *Natural Theology of Evolution* (Allen & Unwin).

[2] Cf. Haldane's *Reign of Relativity*, p. 254. "The higher is the explanation of the lower, and not the lower of the higher." He is speaking of the Greek philosophers.

Moreover, it does not appear to be at all the case that the scientific doctrine of the world—for all the length of its vast epochs and all the extension of its infinite spaces in which man appears but as a moment and a speck—has in any way really dethroned man from his position of supremacy in the visible order as the climax and consummation (so far) of creation.[1] What intelligent beings there may be in other worlds or spheres of being, into which we cannot penetrate, and how much superior to man—"thrones, dominations, virtues, princedoms, powers"—our science cannot tell. It must frame its conceptions on what it knows. And within that sphere of possible knowledge it is in man first and in man only that vast nature finds its interpretation, because here only can its large meaning and content be understood, here only can its general law and tendency be appreciated, here only is one who can co-operate with it by intelligence and will, and by co-operation fashion it in a measure to his purpose.

But this "natural religion"—the vision of God in nature to which the poets and philosophers and artists and moralists open our eyes, and which, with their help, we can make our own—is to most of us a very unsatisfying religion. It suggests to those who have lived in the Christian tradition some urgent questions. Thus, (1) this God who is "the wisdom and spirit of the universe," the Truth and Beauty and Righteousness which I can contemplate and with which I can, in a measure, enter into communion, is

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[1] Cf. Pringle Pattison, *The Idea of God*, pp. 28, 82–3, 110–11. He points out that if Kant depreciated the old argument from design in the sphere of physical nature, he also restored the argument from design by his recognition of moral values as supreme, and his theory of the universe as "a realm of ends."

He (if I may speak of "He" and "Him") personal? While I seek to know Him, does He know me and love me and respond to me? Ought I to tremble before Him as my personal Sovereign and Judge, awful in His righteousness? And through such fear of the Lord can I learn to love Him and trust Him as my Father?

Can He hear my prayers and help me in my troubles? Can He take specific and positive action on my behalf and on behalf of humanity? Or is it really only certain gracious aspects of nature which I am abstracting from the whole and calling God, while all the time the Absolute, the whole, the ultimate force and energy of all things, remains inscrutable and ambiguous?

Again, (2) I call God "the wisdom and spirit of the universe," but does He only gradually realize Himself in the world and (if the words have any meaning) come to the knowledge of Himself in man? Is He thus as dependent on the world for expression of Himself as the world is on Him? Is He simply the world, as it were, viewed from within? Or, on the other hand, does He transcend the world, free and perfect in Himself, before ever the world was, its Creator and its Lord?

Once again, (3) if He is the ground and source of all things, evil as well as good, the ground and source of the whole universe which in its main bulk seems so morally indifferent, can He be Himself pure goodness? Is it possible to believe that the spirit of the whole is righteousness and love?

Then when we turn from God to ourselves, other urgent questions arise. We find ourselves intensely conscious of moral freedom only in part realized, but conscious also of being bound as links in endless chains of cause and effect, in soul as well as in body, with the whole of nature. Thus (4) is my sense of freedom a reality, or is it at the last analysis an illusion? And is the God whom I seek and seem to find in nature, a really free creative spirit, or simply a name for certain aspects of an endless necessary process? Again, (5) I am conscious of personality and freedom in myself, such as the experience of my present life stimulates but also oppresses. Is this spiritual consciousness, so thwarted here, the pledge and assurance of an immortal life in God and with God where it can find its realization?

These are momentous questions indeed. We know in a measure the answer which the Christian Faith gives to them, on the ground of a personal revelation of Himself believed to have been given by God through His prophets and His Son. But apart from any postulate of divine self-revelation, what answer can the brooding mind of man, by its eager search, discover to such questions? Now, it must be admitted that the answers of our philosophers and wise men and poets—apart from those who have believed the Christian revelation and built boldly upon it—have been extraordinarily vacillating and ambiguous. For instance, the great Greek masters seem hardly to have asked themselves the question about divine personality which seems to us so important. It was indeed the spirit of Christianity which first made the question of personality in God and in man real and urgent[1]; and it was Christian philosophy which first found it necessary to devise a special word to signify it. The greatest philosophers, on the whole, were content to think of God as an object of intellectual contemplation rather than as a person who knows us, loves us, and helps us. Certainly, again, we shall find no satisfaction, but rather definite discouragement, if we address such urgent questions as our religious needs suggest to the wisdom of the remoter East. In Europe, after the decadence of Greek philosophy, there is a period of a thousand years when the philosophers of the Catholic world accepted among their premises the doctrines of the Christian faith and philosophized on the assumption of their truth. But since modern philosophy began its course with Descartes and Spinoza, on a basis of free thinking without regard to the authority of any Church, there has been indeed an intense application of the deepest thinking to these problems, but, so far as the answer to these questions of ours is concerned, with singularly vacillating and ambiguous result. Thus Descartes still, like a scholastic, " proves " the existence of God as the eternal, perfect, and personal Creator, distinct from all His creatures ; but for his greater successor, Spinoza, God is simply the one eternal substance, indistinguishable from nature, whom indeed it is our highest intellectual joy to love, but whom we cannot conceive of as loving us, or as willing and doing particular things, or as in any respect what we call personal, without His ceasing to be God, the universal substance. Thus while Spinoza has been called the God-intoxicated thinker, he was excommunicated by the Jewish community to which he belonged, and, not without some excuse, spoken of as an atheist. Indeed indecision about questions, which to minds coloured by the Christian tradition seem vital, haunts modern philosophy. Mr. Clement Webb, who himself argues strongly for personality in God, admits [1] the general reluctance of philosophers to affirm it. They seem always falling back to a position akin to that of the Greeks. Even so strong a contemporary theist as Dr. Pringle Pattison, though he labours to assert the divine transcendence, does not really succeed in doing so,[2] and he seems to think, with Spinoza, that divine perfection excludes all choice of particular things or persons.[3]

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[1] Cf. Haldane, *Reign of Relativity*, p. 260, "Where Hellenistic reflection remained least complete, etc. . . . It did not take sufficient account of the infinite value belonging to human personality, humble as well as great. That was where it laid itself open to the criticism of Christianity, a criticism which subsequent reflection by degrees assimilated and found justified."

Then, as regards the character of God, philosophy seems to leave us with a perpetual and insoluble contradiction between the postulate of a perfect good God, made by the healthy moral consciousness of mankind, and the sort of conception which this mixed world of good and evil seems to suggest of a spirit in whom (or in which) good and evil can lie together as simply necessary modes of being; which line of thought again suggests or coincides with the philosophy which, at the last resort, makes human freedom and responsibility an illusion. Nor again do our philosophers give us any clear answer to the question of personal immortality.

No doubt this or that man of vigorous and confident intellect may seem to see his way through these tremendous questions to a solution. He may be able to proclaim the verdict of reason in favour of divine personality, divine goodness, and human freedom and immortality. But for most of us, if we rigorously try to shut out from our minds all the light which can only be ours as believers in the divine revelation of which the Bible is the record, it must be confessed that great nature, for all its divine qualities, remains an impenetrable mystery—a sphinx who gives no answers to importunate questions which we cannot but continue to ask.

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[1] Webb's *God and Personality*, p. 110.

[2] See appendix at the end of the chapter.

[3] See his essay on "Transcendence and Immanence," p. 14 in the volume entitled *The Spirit* (Macmillan, 1919).

We shall have to return later from another point of view upon these momentous questions and consider them more at leisure. But it is concerning this other point of view—that is, the point of view of divine revelation—that I want now to speak. St. Paul assures us that the nations of men were put into the world "that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him,"[1] and that "the living God left not himself without witness,"[2] and that His invisible attributes, "His everlasting power and divinity," are since the creation of the world "clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made."[3] This is substantiated in experience. The universe warrants or compels, as we have seen, belief in God, in some sort. But St. Paul also assures us that "in the wise providence of God, the world through its philosophy was not able to know God," and that it was God's good pleasure, in consequence, to disclose His real mind and purpose through the message of the preacher which the philosophers ridicule[4]—that is, by a real and effective self-revelation. Elsewhere the Bible tells us, in memorable phrases which haunt our memory when we are wearied with philosophical argument, that we "cannot by searching find out God."[5] These two kinds of statements seem to me to correspond with the facts. We are bound to search for God with all the energy of our reason, and in a measure we find Him; but at the same time He baffles our search. It carries us a certain way, and then leaves us, disappointed and disheartened. We discover *that* God is, but not *what* He is. But both the eager search and the discovery, and, on the other hand, the disappointment and the failure, may, we feel, both be parts of a movement of God in us which is to be met by a corresponding movement of God, if I may so speak, from without or from above, to reveal Himself in much more satisfying fullness.

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[1] Acts xvii. 27. [2] Acts xiv. 17. [3] Romans i. 20.

[4] This is, I think, a fair paraphrase of 1 Cor. i. 21.

[5] Job xi. 7.

Now, no doubt this idea of positive divine revelation has often been so presented, both in its relation to reason and in its relation to natural religions, as to be very difficult of acceptance. Faith in divine revelation has been set in opposition to reason. The merit of faith has been represented as if it lay in triumphing over reason. But this kind of representation may be simply a misrepresentation. It may be the case that revelation supplements but in no way contradicts the conclusions and intimations of "unassisted" reason. Perhaps there is no real justification for setting revelation and reason in opposition at all. What I think is amazing is how little the modern intellectual world, which claims to be, and appears to be, seeking God with all seriousness —how little it faces the question of the reality of positive divine self-revelation. We are bound to think of a self-revealing God in some sense—self-revealing in nature as a whole—in its law, in its order, in its beauty—self-revealing with extraordinary intensity in conscience, and moreover with extraordinarily different degrees of intensity. It is face to face with this universal self-revelation of God that there has arisen that general consciousness of God which we have been considering, with all its occasional clearness of vision and also with all its profound and disturbing uncertainties. Why, then, should not this process of self-disclosure on God's part have been along one particular line intensified and clarified so as to become a real illumination? Why, moreover, should not one race of men have been the channel of this fuller self-disclosure of God to the whole world, as other races have been of other good things which, when matured, have become universal in application?[1] Of course all this involves a conscious providence in history—a real personality in God. But we do not, for the most part, feel that we have any *a priori* reason justifying the exclusion of the possibility of a particular providence and a personal God. Is it not our duty at least to examine the question of the reality of a divine revelation which certain religions press upon us? Our memories are haunted by Plato's pathetic words, put into the mouth of Simmias in the *Phaedo*, where the question of the immortality of the soul is under discussion. "It seems to me, Socrates, as to you also, I fancy, that it is very difficult, if not impossible, in this present life to have clear knowledge concerning such subjects; but that, on the other hand, it is the mark of a faint-hearted spirit to desist from examining all that is said about them in every way, or to abandon the search so long as there is any chance of light anywhere. For on such subjects one ought to secure one of two things, either to learn or discover the truth, or, if this is impossible, at least to get the best of human argument (words) and the hardest to refute, and relying on this as on a raft, to sail the perilous sea of life, unless one were able, more securely and less perilously, to make one's journey upon a safer vessel—upon some divine word." [1]

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[1] More is said later on the point, and on the whole relation of special revelation to the general reason. See also Dr. William Temple's *Mens Creatrix* (Macmillan), the prologue. The contrasted ideas of struggling reason and illuminating revelation is put with extraordinary impressiveness at the end of James Mozley's essay on Blanco White: see his collected Essays (Rivingtons), vol. ii.

Let us, then, at least contemplate the possibility of a particular divine self-disclosure, gradually maturing, and finally becoming universal. Let us consent at least to face the evidence and "to go where the argument leads us."

Appendix on Dr. A. Seth Pringle Pattison's article entitled "Immanence or Transcendence," in *The Spirit*—a volume of essays edited by Canon Streeter (Macmillan, 1919).

It is a very interesting question whether—quite apart from the acceptance of a positive self-disclosure of God, such as the Christian Church believes to have been given through the prophets and by Christ the Son of God—it is possible to arrive at any secure intellectual hold upon a transcendent God—upon a God, that is, who, in some sense prior to the slowly developing universe, existed and exists eternally, self-conscious and self-determined, holding in His eternal being and mind the law and purpose and power of all the slow development. It is quite plain that this is the God whom the Christian Church has believed in. It has believed in God the eternal, who before the world was, was alive, 'the living God,' self-complete and perfect, and who freely of His goodwill created all that is.

There is, of course, profound intellectual difficulty—

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[1] Plato, *Phaedo*, 85 C.D.

amounting, I think, to impossibility—in conceiving of such an eternal, living, personal God as a solitary monad, seeing that all the elements of conscious life, whether will or knowledge or love, involve relationship—an object of will, an object of knowledge, an object of love—and an eternal and perfect Spirit therefore involves an eternal and perfect object. But when, long after Biblical times, the Church became conscious of this intellectual problem, it had already been long familiar with the idea of the trinity of persons in the unity of God and found in this belief the solution of the intellectual difficulty. We must be careful to note that the idea or doctrine of the Trinity had not been originally formulated with any reference to the intellectual problem. It had been formulated as an attempt to put into words the Church's new experience of the Son, Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit as persons in some sense to be ranked with God, the Father, without violation of His unity. But later it found in this trinitarian creed the solution of the intellectual problem in this manner—God could be conceived of as eternally alive, with the full life of will and knowledge and love, prior to and apart from creation, because His own eternal being contained in itself the necessary relationships—the fellowship of the Father with the Eternal Word or Son and with the Holy Spirit. In this eternal fellowship the full activity of life was possible. All that was to be created in time—" whatever has come into being "—already existed in eternal counterpart in the Word or Son [1]; and whatever life there be in the world was already active and conscious in the Eternal Spirit.

But all this conception which is due to the belief in a positive revelation must at present be ignored, whether we hold it for true or no. At any rate its grounds are not yet within our purview in this enquiry. The question now is : Can the unassisted intellect of man attain by speculation on the universe or out of its own resources to any secure hold upon the transcendent God ? Let it be granted that it can attain to the secure conviction that in some real sense God exists as " the spirit of the universe " or " the soul of the world." But the world, as we know, is not static. It is a world of gradual process and evolution. In it we see first force, then life, then, first fully in man, self-conscious mind and will. This suggests to us the conception of Henri Bergson (apparently lying in his mind side by side with another conception) of an unconscious spirit of life striving to express itself in the material world and finally becoming conscious of itself in man. Is this the only idea of God which nature suggests—an unconscious mind or purpose (if the words have any intelligible meaning), gradually gaining consciousness and self-expression in man? But the difficulty of such a conception is enormous.[1] The unity of the world is so close-knit that there is no room for two principles, matter and life, such as Bergson's language might sometimes suggest. It is one force (or God), and one only, which there expresses itself alike in things material and spiritual. And order, which presupposes mind, belongs to the material universe prior to the emergence there of life or mind. Can we then conceive of a cosmic Mind or Spirit, which is unconscious or semi-conscious till it becomes conscious of itself in man? I cannot give reality to the conception. And the question I am now asking is, Does Dr. Pringle Pattison help us in this difficulty ? Does he succeed in giving reality to the idea of the transcendent God ?

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[1] This is the interpretation given in early days to St. John i. 3–4, R.V. marg., " Without him was not anything made. That which hath been made was life in him." But I doubt the punctuation and interpretation of the particular passage.

1. No doubt he seeks to affirm the transcendence of God. He is plainly not satisfied with the idea, appearing first in Spinoza, of a God (*natura naturans*) who has no will or consciousness in Himself. but only in the finite spirits who are parts of created nature (*natura naturata*) : see *Idea of God*, p. 255, and the Essay on which we are commenting.

2. Yet he plainly and constantly denies any such idea of personal self-completeness in God as would present Him as independent of His creation, or prior to creation, as He is presented in the Christian view. On the contrary, he insists that the creation is necessary to God and co-eternal. It is only in creation that God realizes Himself (*Essay*, p. 13 ; *Idea of God*, lect. xvi).

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[1] See further, pp. 148–53.

3. Moreover he quite clearly can attach no meaning to the existence of material things apart from conscious beings (*Essay*, p. 16). Consequently " there is in strictness no creation—no finite universe at all—till spirits are created " (or " begotten ") (p. 17). It is only, therefore, in finite spirits that God can realize Himself. This, again, he makes quite clear.

4. But finite spirits appear first, in the world as we know it, in man and as the last stage of an age-long development. How then does Dr. Pringle Pattison escape the conclusion that first in man does God become conscious of Himself or alive with the life of will and knowledge and love ? In what sense can he talk of an eternal or transcendent life or consciousness of God ? In no sense, so far as I can see. I suppose it is because he feels the difficulty that he throws out the suggestion of finite spirits other than man ; " multitudes of self-conscious spirits may exist " in other worlds (p. 21), and they " may vastly surpass mankind as we know it." Well, the Christian, through the assurance of Christ, may have grounds for believing this to be true, and may reasonably take it as a fact into his calculations. But—apart from the belief in a positive and supernatural disclosure through Christ of spiritual facts which would be otherwise unknown to man, which Dr. Pringle Pattison does not, I gather, find an acceptable idea, and which at any rate is not at present in question—this suggestion of unseen hosts of spirits is purely mythological and hypothetical. Certainly it cannot be relied upon. The eternal must somehow, he tells us, find room for the time series. It must include it. Does it not, in Dr. Pringle Pattison's philosophy, depend upon it ? Is his eternal anything more than the idea of creation viewed as completed ? I do not see how he can substantiate his transcendent God. I think he remains in effect with Spinoza.

Moreover, if his hypothesis be granted, these hosts of conscious spirits either emerged, like men, at a certain stage in a long development—in which case the problem is simply duplicated and not solved—or they are co-eternal with God and co-essential—in which case we appear to have the foundation of a pluralism or polytheism capable of strange developments and utterly alien to Dr. Pringle Pattison's monotheism.

Apart then from this speculation in the unknowable, where for Dr. Pringle Pattison is there ground for belief in any transcendent God eternally conscious and alive?

CHAPTER IV

THE QUESTION OF REVELATION

THIS, then, is the question: Has the Divine Mind or Spirit whom we discern by the light of reason hidden in the world—hidden in that its nature and character are involved in such obscurity—has it, or has He, taken action, like a person, on His side to disclose or reveal Himself to those "who are seeking after God, if haply they may feel after Him and find Him"? No doubt the basal assumption or fundamental faith on which alone any scientific or philosophical or religious view of the universe can be built up is the assumption that our reason can be trusted; and therefore any alleged self-revelation of God which should prove to be inconsistent with the requirements of reason could only increase the bewilderment of mind in which we already find ourselves in view of the obscurity of nature. But on all showing the human reason is partial and imperfect; and a self-disclosure of God is easily conceived which should not violate but augment the light of reason—should supplement it and supply some satisfaction and response to its urgent questions and ignorant prayers. There is to-day in most men's minds a profound and easily justified scepticism on all abstract dogmas of philosophers as to what is or is not possible or believable.

In this our temper contrasts markedly with the temper of the scholastic period or the period of Descartes and Spinoza. Science has proved so many things true which in the abstract appeared inconceivable, and the abstract dogmatists have proved themselves singularly fallible. Thus we may peremptorily refuse to decide *a priori* that the supreme reason or God cannot directly communicate His mind and purpose to the reason and conscience of men. The opposite anticipation is at least as tenable. Moreover, the facts of the moral conscience among men—to which the Right appears regularly, especially in the noblest of our race, as the divine will and purpose, enjoining obedience and correspondence on our part, and in a measure self-revealing—and the nearly universal popular belief that certain individuals are in a special sense inspired by God or by a God—these facts of common experience show us human nature in the broad ready to recognize divine self-revelation.

Unhindered therefore by any prohibitory dogma of the reason, we may approach the real question, which is one of fact. The religion of Israel, on which Christianity and, in a different degree, Mohammedanism are based, claims that such a revelation has been given. It has persuaded the whole Western, and in a sense the Mohammedan, world over long centuries of the truth of its claim. And, what is much more important, the strength of our morality has been drawn from the belief in a self-revealing God. The belief has obvious power. It has apparently put man in touch with reality. Thus the claim deserves at least the attention of every rational man. What the admission of this claim involves will be matter for further consideration. Let us first of all, as simply and objectively as possible, consider the claim of positive revelation made by the Hebrew religion, and the grounds on which it rests for us to-day.

What, then, precisely is the point to be considered? To restrict the area of enquiry, and to remove it from the region of doubtful questions, let us take the period of the prophets of Israel whose writings remain to us, beginning with Amos, about 760 B.C. or earlier, and ending some three hundred years or more later with Malachi.

A word must be said in explanation of these limits. No one can read the earliest prophet whose writings remain to us, Amos, without seeing that the foundation of the prophetic teaching had already been laid before his day. He can apparently take for granted that the God of Israel—Jahweh—is the one and only God, the Creator of heaven and earth,[1] the just Judge of all mankind, perfect in righteousness. He and all the prophets would repudiate the idea that they were innovators. They would no doubt refer themselves back to the time of God's first redemption of His people from Egypt, and to the covenant given through Moses, or to an earlier period still. I believe that we must take it to be true that the essential features of the prophetic doctrine do date from Moses, and that the popular Jahweh-worship, against which the prophets of our period protest, was really a corruption and degradation—a falling away from what had been delivered to the fathers of Israel. Nevertheless the question of what exactly the religion of Abraham was, or what the original Mosaic deposit was, is a very complicated question involved in all the uncertainties which surround documents whose date cannot be put near to the events which they describe. Whereas from Amos to Malachi we are on the clear ground of history, and we shall be assuming nothing that is doubtful in considering the plain facts of their doctrine. Also the date when the supposed divine communications began makes no real difference to the argument. Whether it began with Moses or whether with Amos, the question of its source remains substantially the same.

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[1] Amos v. 8–9.

As to the later limit which I have chosen, it is probable that some written prophecies, such as Joel and the later part of Zechariah, date some hundred years later than Malachi, and it is certain (in my judgement) that the book of Daniel dates some three centuries later than Malachi. And the prophetic spirit is conspicuously to be found not only in the Prophets, but in Psalms and Wisdom literature and later apocalypses. These again contain fresh elements of teaching, which are incorporated in the Jewish authoritative tradition as it was received and perpetuated in the primitive Christian Church, e.g. the doctrine of the Wisdom of God immanent in nature, the fuller doctrine of the angels, and the clear assertion of the resurrection. But I am not prepared to argue that these elements of the Jewish tradition cannot be accounted for partly as inevitable developments and partly as incorporations from Greek and Persian sources, once granted the fundamental basis of prophetic doctrine.

These considerations have led to the choice of the limits Amos to Malachi. All that I want is to be found there and nothing that is fairly disputable.

During these 300 years, then, there was a continuous succession of prophets whose writings are preserved to us. There are obscure passages in these books which for our present purpose we can wholly ignore, and there are passages assigned, perhaps rightly, to a later date with which we are not concerned. What is important is undisputed and is plain, so that he that runs may read. It makes its impression only if we read it continuously.[1]

Here, then, we find a succession of wonderful men, mostly conscious of profound unpopularity in their contemporary world, who nevertheless, even in the face of the most determined hostility of courts and people, delivered a message which we feel to be self-consistent and to involve the same great principles throughout, about God—His nature, His will, His purposes—and about human nature—its dignity, its responsibility, and its sin; a message which they declare, with the fullest conviction, to be derived not from their own reasoning or speculation, nor from tradition[2] (though they would have indignantly repudiated the idea that they were its first recipients), nor from any external source at all, but from God, the God of Israel, speaking in their own souls, so intensely and clearly that there could be no mistake about it. Let us listen to some typical utterances:

"I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a dresser of sycomore trees: and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel. Now therefore hear the word of the Lord."[3]

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[1] The best assistance in doing this is *The Hebrew Prophets*, by Woods and Powell (Oxford Press)—four handy little volumes with introduction, text, and very brief but sufficient notes.

[2] Their relation to earlier revelation may be compared to that of St. Paul. St. Paul was not the first recipient of "the truth as it is in Jesus," but he held it, and his commission to teach it, "neither from men nor through men."

[3] Amos vii. 14.

"But I truly am full of power by the spirit of the Lord, and of judgement, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin."[1]

"Mine heart within me is broken, all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome; because of the Lord, and because of His holy words. . . . Is not my word like as fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"[2]

We notice that they are acutely conscious of the contrast between their own feelings and ideas on the one hand, and on the other the purpose and mind of God who constrains them. This is vividly presented where the prophet holds conversations with God, represents to God his own feelings, questions and complains, and is answered.[3] These prophets are clearly conscious of two distinct currents or forces within them—the current of their own feelings, and the overmastering pressure of God who possesses them, making His mind and will articulate to them.

Such passages recur constantly. The prophets, then, because they are conscious of being thus even violently dealt with and possessed, claimed to utter with supreme authority a word or message from God to man. The content of this message is, on the whole, quite clear in its final outcome. It is a message which proclaims God as intensely personal and moral, as the one and only God, the absolute creator and sustainer and judge of all that is, almighty in the sense that no other God or external power exists to restrain Him. It proclaims Him in unmistakable terms for a practical purpose, not, that is, with a view to the satisfaction of metaphysical enquiries, but for the sole purpose of making His people understand that there is no manner of fellowship with Him possible except by conformity to His character, that is, by goodness, social and individual, by "doing justly, and loving mercy, and walking humbly with God."[1] It proclaims the responsibility of man as a free being, and his awful power to thwart God by his pride and wilfulness, and to throw His world into confusion—in Isaiah's tremendous phrase, "to make God serve with his sins."[2] It assumes that God does not over the long course of this world's history intend to remove man's liberty thus to thwart His purpose; but it declares God's intention to judge and overthrow one by one every structure and device of human pride and wilfulness, and finally to vindicate Himself in His whole creation. That is "the day of the Lord." Meanwhile, His prophets are His mouthpiece to make His character and will and purpose known, and to call on those who have ears to hear to correspond and co-operate with Him, that is, to stand for righteousness and truth in evil days.

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[1] Micah iii. 8.

[2] Jer. xxiii. 9–29.

[3] See Amos vii. 2–9 and 15, viii. 1–2; Isa. vi. 5–12, xxi. 2–10, xxii. 4–14; Jer. i. 6–14, iv. 10, xiv. 7 to end, xv. 10–21, etc. Cf. Sanday, *Inspiration* (Longmans, 1893), p. 148.

And it was upon this revelation of God, given through the prophets, that in later days Jesus unmistakably took His stand. After a long period of what in one sense was the victory of the prophetic teaching since the Captivity, and in other sense turned out to be its eclipse[3]—after a long period during which there were no prophets—Jesus of Nazareth, following on John the Baptist, renewed the prophetic message, infinitely deepening and broadening it, but in no respect altering its fundamental character. About the relation of Jesus to the prophets, however, more will have to be said later. Here it is enough to call attention to what is indisputable, that no representation of the teaching of Jesus Christ can make any pretence to truth which fails to recognize that He stood upon the foundation of the prophets, and that the civilization of Christendom, in its whole moral and religious fabric, stands with Jesus Christ upon that basis.

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[1] Micah vi. 8.

[2] Isa. xliii. 24.

[3] By the victory of the prophets after the Captivity I mean that their whole teaching was formally accepted. There was no more idolatry or tendency to idolatry on the part of the people. And the whole ceremonial *cultus* was reorganized—following the teaching of Ezekiel—so as to express the ethical principles of the prophets. This was a great victory as the result of a divine judgement. On the

The message of the prophets made, and still makes, a profound difference to mankind. It impinged upon the human soul and conscience in a quite new way, with new motives, new fears, new hopes, new aspirations, new possibilities. This monotheism of the prophets created a new type of character. Judged by its effect, it is markedly different from the religion of the philosophers, whether ancient or modern. And that because its ideas are different. It claims, in fact, to introduce into human experience a new source of information about God of the most important kind, such as never could have been derived from the consideration of nature. If the claim of the prophets to speak the word of the Lord is a true claim, the philosopher (as well as the ordinary man) has got

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other hand, prophecy gave way to law, and law tended to formalism. So the later Judaism tended to "make the word of God of none effect by its tradition." Any one of the old prophets who had been "raised up" to visit earth again when John the Baptist began his mission would have been profoundly disappointed with the results of the victory of the prophetic teaching four hundred years before. He would have joined John in his denunciation of "the offspring of vipers." He would have seen a new idolatry in their misunderstanding of the character of God.

the material with which he has to deal immensely enlarged. Athanasius, in a striking phrase, described the Hebrew prophets as "the sacred school of the knowledge of God and of the spiritual life for all mankind."[1] If there really was such a divine education of mankind of which the Hebrew prophets were the instruments, we must put them, with regard to religion, in a position analogous to that which we commonly assign to the Greeks in philosophy or art, and to the Romans in administration and law, but profoundly different in respect of the source of their authority and the method by which they gained their assurance—the method of positive revelation, given and received.

It seems to me that the intellectual world of to-day is studiously refusing to face exactly this question. But the peremptory form in which the question presents itself can be realized by any man who likes to read the prophets—to read and to ponder the vivid accounts which the prophets give us of their commissions,[2] and in general their intense experiences of the dealings of God with them—experiences from which it is not too much to say the world gained a new spiritual life and a wholly new moral power. Were these real experiences—that is, experiences which brought them into contact with reality, external to and independent of themselves, experiences of God forcing Himself upon them with a message which could be made articulate in human words and intelligible to human hearts and minds?

Some of the ways in which an attempt is made to explain or explain away the prophetic experiences so that they shall not bear the conclusions which they appear to bear, if taken as veridical, we must with all anxious impartiality seek to examine. But to obviate in advance certain current misconceptions, we must first take special note of some facts concerning the origin, nature, and progressive character of the prophetic teaching.

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[1] *De Incarnatione*, 12; cf. the noble preface to Ewald's *History of Israel.*

[2] Isa. vi.: Jerem. i.: Ezek. ii.-iii. Amos vii. 14.

1. It had its origin amidst phenomena familiar to all religions and especially to the Semitic religions around it. St. Chrysostom[1] boldly declared that all the elements of the Jewish ceremonial law—"the sacrifices and the cleansings and the new moons and the ark and the temple itself had their origin from heathen grossness." The same thing is true about prophecy in its external aspects. Almost all nations, and in particular the nations with whom the Hebrews were acquainted and to whom they were akin, had a special class of "professionals," priests or seers or diviners, whose supposed science enabled them, by various methods, to ascertain the will of the god of the nation and to claim his guidance. A certain ethical effect may be found in some of these religious institutions, as, for instance, in the Greek oracles, and we need not stay to discuss whether there was by their means a really divine influence at work. Let us grant it. But in the main the influence of these "natural religions" was not ethical. Especially the religions which surrounded Israel, whether the religion of the local Canaanite Baalim and Ashtoreths, or the religions of the national gods, such as Chemosh the Moabite god, were not ethical. They

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[1] St. Chrys., *Hom. in Matt.* vi. 3, *P.G.* lvii. col. 66. The patristic recognition of the earthly origin of the religion of the Jews in its material elements has been generally ignored in the orthodox tradition.

were at their root nature worships, and often worships of the productive and reproductive powers of nature. Thus as nature seems to be indifferent to morality, so nature worships are non-moral or immoral. It is surprising to most of us to discover to how great an extent we of the Western world owe the intimate association of religion with morality to the direct or indirect influence of the special class of Hebrew prophets whom we are considering. Among the people great and small with whom Israel was brought in contact, religion was profoundly popular. The gods were taken for granted. The god belonged to his people and the people to their god. He was not conceived of as asking of them anything contrary to their customs. They were to give him his proper *cultus*—his sacrifices and rites—and to avoid all that annoyed and irritated him. But character and morality were not among his attributes or his claims. On the other hand, he belonged to his people and could be expected to help them, and there existed the class of professionals who knew how to find out his will and disclose it, and who could more or less foretell what was to happen. So they were to be consulted by the peoples and their rulers in their difficulties. Doubtless in some such way by the help of the priests Mesha King of Moab, contemporary with Omri King of Israel, whose inscription remains for us, ascertained the will of Chemosh.

> "I am Mesha King of Moab. . . . I made this high place to Chemosh because he has helped me against all them that attacked me, and has caused me to see my desire upon all my enemies. Omri King of Israel oppressed Moab long, because Chemosh was angry against his land. . . . And the King of Israel had built Ataroth. I attacked the town and took it, and I exterminated all

the men of the town—a pleasing spectacle for Chemosh and Moab, . . . and I dragged [some others] before the face of Chemosh. And Chemosh said to me: Go and take Nebo from Israel. And I set out by night, and I besieged that town . . . and I took it and killed all things . . . for I had vowed them to Ashtar Chemosh. And there I took the altar hearths [?] of Jehovah and dragged them before the face of Chemosh. The King of Israel built Jahash and fortified himself there against me, and Chemosh drove him before his face . . . and Chemosh said to me: Go down and fight against Haronaim."[1]

Obviously this narrative and its religious tone recall familiar features in the Hebrew books. In fact it is impossible to read attentively some of the narratives of the book of Judges, or the books of Samuel, or the denunciations of the popular religion from the lips of the prophets, as they saw it in being, and not to own that the popular religion of Israel was much the same as the religion of the people round about them. This religion, the religion of Jahweh, as the people understood it, was popular and universal. The people trampled Jahweh's courts in crowds; they spent lavishly on the worship, the sacrifices, and the incense; they loved the festivals; but plainly they entertained no idea of any connexion between their religion and what we call morality, individual and social. Religion in their sense was quite compatible both with sexual immorality and drunkenness and with social oppression and fraud and cruelty. It is on this ground only that the earlier prophets denounce so utterly the ceremonial *cultus* as worthless in the sight of God.[2] Also the people of Israel, through prophets and seers, by Urim and Thummim, by sacred pillars, by ephods, and by the sacred ark, ascertained the word of Jahweh, much as Mesha, the king of Moab, ascertained the will of Chemosh—that is to say, the directions which He was believed to give His people in their practical concerns, military and personal. The existence of this sort of Jahweh-religion in Israel is unmistakable through the period of the Judges and the early kingdom. It is the religion and the religious worship which the later prophets denounce.[1] In the main it was Jahweh-worship, for the Hebrews had on the whole no desire to forsake their national God, as they understood the matter, either in Israel or in Judah. They did indeed lapse into the worship of other gods, and more and more as the fierce teaching of the prophets identified the name of Jahweh with a tremendous moral claim which they were not prepared to accede to. This idolatry the prophets alternately denounce and ridicule. But in the earlier days, before the continuous succession of the prophets, the people in general probably felt very little essential difference between Chemosh and Jahweh, or the religions of Chemosh and Jahweh, or between one Baal and another. Such, as we read the earlier records and the sweeping denunciations of the prophets, we discern to have been the popular religion of Israel.

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[1] See Hastings's *D. of B.*, art. Moabite Stone, vol. iii, p. 407.

[2] It is hardly necessary to refer to the famous passages Isa. i. 10–17, Hos. vi. 6, Amos iv. 4–6, v. 21–7, Micah vi. 6–8, Ps. l. 8–15, etc. Such denunciations cease with the Captivity. The tone of the prophets after the Captivity is quite different.

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[1] See, for a conception of Jahweh as in some sense limited to His own land and peoples, like Chemosh to Moab, Judg. xi. 23–4, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. For seers and prophets as paid professionals see 1 Sam. ix. 7–8. For music and violent motion and mental disturbance as the accompaniment of prophecy see 1 Sam. x. 5–6, 10–13, xix. 24, Num. xxiv. 4, 2 Kings iii. 15. For divination by Urim and Thummim, 1 Sam. xiv. 41, [restoring the text according to the indication of the LXX: "If on me and my son, Jehovah give Urim, but, if on the people, give Thummim,] 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. By teraphim and ephod and ark, Judg. xvii. 5, 6, 1 Sam. xxiii. 9–12, xxx. 7–8, 2 Sam. v. 19–23, Josh. xviii. 6–10, Hos. iv. 12 (by stock and staff), Zech. x. 2. Cf. among the heathen Gen. xliv. 5 (by goblet), Ezek. xxi 21 (by arrows and teraphim and liver). By dreams, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, Jer. xxiii. 25; by wizards, Lev. xix. 31, Isa. viii. 19. See list of prohibited methods in Deut. xviii. 10–12, with Driver's notes.

It was in this kind of atmosphere and out of this tradition that the great moral prophets, whose writings remain to us, emerged. They were few among many. The mass of the prophets all along, until after the Captivity the whole prophetic office fell into disrepute,[1] retained the old low idea of religion, mixed with mere fraud and avarice. The "true" prophets habitually denounce them as a corrupt class, misleading the people.[2] They themselves retain some of the characteristics of the "natural" prophets—they perform symbolic acts for a sign, they see visions, and one of them (Ezekiel) is notable for going into conditions of trance.[3] Nevertheless, as compared with the popular prophets, they are something wholly different. Their aim is wholly different. Their message is associated with the clearest mental vision and fullest consciousness. It speaks out of the moral reason of the prophet to the moral reason of the people. If the prophets were what they claimed to be, it must be recognized that God was doing through them a new thing, but that the new thing sprang out of what was natural and racial. And it is, as we have already recognized, a most false method to imagine that, because some new thing emerged out of something lower, therefore the lower thing explains the new birth. It does this in the case of prophecy no more than physics can explain life or irrational nature reason. Rather in the new thing we see the explanation of that lower thing out of which it had its origin, as man explains nature rather than nature man.

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[1] See Zech. xiii. 3–6.

[2] Elijah's adversaries appear clearly as prophets of a false and rival God (1 Kings xviii. 19). But Micaiah's adversaries claim apparently to be prophets of Jehovah: 1 Kings xxii., see ver. 24. For denunciations of the prophets as a class see Hos. ix. 7–8, Micah iii. 5–11, Zeph. iii. 4, Isa. xxviii. 7, xxix. 10, Jer. ii. 26, v. 31, xxiii. 15–40 (a very illuminating passage), Ezek. xiii. 15–16. All these passages imply that the prophets as a class were abandoned men.

[3] I feel that I have not the qualifications for writing on the psychical condition of the prophets. I do not see signs of *trance* conditions in any of the prophets whom we reckon as the true prophets except Ezekiel. Job iv. 12–17 and Dan. viii. 18 perhaps suggest that in the later period of Jewish literature a trance condition was regarded as the natural condition for the prophet. All that I would insist upon is that, whatever the physical condition of the prophets when they received their communications, their minds were intensely alert and conscious and rational. What possessed them did not annihilate or override their own mental faculties. No one can read their prophecies and fail to see this. The early Christian Church (in the Montanist controversy) was clearly right in asserting that in the true succession of prophets the inspiring Spirit did not destroy but intensified the natural rational faculty of its human organs. They retain their full personality with its individual characteristics. See *The Church and the Ministry*, Appendix H and I, and references to Bonwetsch there given.

2. In what sense is it the special function of the prophets to foretell the future? In a sense this had been the characteristic function of the Semitic prophets. They were the men who were believed to be able, by vision or dream or mechanical instrument, to declare the will of God not yet evident—to say for instance, like Ahab's prophets, whether a certain expedition was going to be successful. "Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear?" "If I pursue after this troop, shall I overtake them?"[1] was the kind of question they were expected to answer. But this was not the special characteristic of the prophets whom we call the true prophets, few among many, whose writings remain to us. Their special characteristic was that they knew the character and purpose of Jehovah and His moral claim on their contemporaries. But for this very

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[1] 1 Kings xxii. 6; 1 Sam. xxx. 8.

reason, because they saw so clearly into the nature and will and purpose of God, so they saw in large measure what He would do. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing," cries Amos, "but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."[1] Thus Amos proclaims with certainty the imminent doom of the Northern Kingdom, and, less distinctly, the judgement on Judah. Later Micah is found announcing the doom of Jerusalem, as certainly as Jeremiah a hundred years later, or our Lord again seven hundred years later, under circumstances of renewed apostasy.

Again, the instrument of these dooms or judgements is sometimes, but not always, clear to the prophet's mind. Thus it is clear to Jeremiah that Babylon is to be the instrument of divine chastisement on Jerusalem; but it appears that Hosea had, in an earlier age, no certainty whether the instrument of chastisement on the Northern Kingdom was to be Egypt or Assyria. On the other hand, in the days of the righteous King Hezekiah, Isaiah foresees distinctly that the apparently resistless might of the Assyrian monarch is to be baffled and Jerusalem is to be saved; and all the prophets, those most clearly who were occupied in proclaiming immediate doom on God's people, proclaimed also that His purpose in calling Israel would not ultimately fail, but that through chastisement would come restoration and a vast enhancement of spiritual glory—the Kingdom of the Messiah.

But the divine instruments of chastisement, whether Assyria or Babylon, though they are used by God for the purposes of divine justice, are not themselves just. They are cruel and monstrous tyrannies. Thus on them in turn judgement must come, as it is certain to come on all the institutions which represent human insolence and cruelty and lust. Thus a large part of the prophetic message consists in the announcement of "oracles of Jehovah" upon contemporary kingdoms or empires or civilizations. It cannot be said that these forecasts are infallible in detail. Ezekiel pronounced distinctly a doom on Tyre at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon which was not by that hand or at that time fulfilled.[1] But on the whole these prophecies were remarkably fulfilled. For instance, one of the miracles of history is the fact that Israel, the divinely appointed instrument of the true religion (as it is contended), though it was again and again apparently absorbed, or on the way to be absorbed, in the great nations which trampled it down, such as Babylon or the empire of Alexander, was in fact preserved to fulfil its separate function. There is force in the famous answer which is said to have been given to Frederick the Great's question, "What is the best argument for the truth of the Christian religion?" "The Jews, your Majesty." But all these announcements of what was to happen were forecasts—mainly of the immediate future—uttered by the prophets for the warning or encouragement of their contemporaries, forecasts arising out of the circumstances of the present and (this is the most important point) involved in the proclamation of the righteousness and righteous government of God. This—and not future events, except so far as they were bound up with this—it was the prophet's business to declare. It is true that, inasmuch as the reign of the righteous God is declared to be universal, it is necessary that God should vindicate Himself finally in the whole universe: thus we have the magnificent prophecies of the day of the Lord—that is, the world-wide judgement upon all that resist God, and the world-wide establishment of the kingdom or reign of God. And the definite prophecies of particular judgements upon particular nations are thrown upon the background of this vast and vague vision of final and cosmic catastrophe and salvation by the prophets of the Old Testament, as later by our Lord, when He announced the coming doom upon Jerusalem. But such forecasts—though, if God be God, they *must* be fulfilled—though the "end of the world" must lie in God coming into His own in the whole of His own creation—involve no detailed knowledge of the future outside the horizon of the prophet's own time.[1] There is no map of the future spread before his eyes. Prophecy is not in any such sense "history written beforehand."[2]

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[1] Amos iii. 7.

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[1] Ezek. xxvi. 7-14; cf. xxix. 18.

The foretelling of the future was, then, a real function of the prophets of Israel, and it was part of the Semitic tradition that they should foretell. In the case of the true prophets their anticipations of the future were intimately bound up with their moral message: they foretold what God must do because He is just. On the whole their anticipations have been indeed wonderfully fulfilled. But it is not in predictions fulfilled that their chief function is to be sought; it is in their message about God and His nature, His character, and His purpose—and about man's capacity, responsibility, and true hope. I am going to argue that their claim to speak the word of the Lord was a true claim; and it was necessary, therefore, that I should describe and more or less limit their function, because the conception of it has, no doubt, been distorted in tradition.

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[1] Thus Micah (v. 5) anticipates the Messiah in time to deliver Judah from the Assyrian. And Haggai and Zechariah in like manner anticipate immediately the glory for recovered Israel. And in the book of Daniel there is a detailed sketch of the actual history, but only up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (when the author certainly lived), and after that only the quite vaguely conceived picture of the immediate glory of the holy nation.

[2] Butler's most unfortunate phrase did mischief proportioned to his extraordinary merits and greatness.

3. In this age we like to place all history in the category of development. We receive great encouragement to do this in the Bible. But we are slowly learning that the dogma of development must be moulded to the facts, frankly observed and fairly interpreted; and that historical development has been something quite different from orderly and necessary progress. Now, when the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews contends for a progressive revelation "in many parts and many manners" through the line of prophets culminating in Jesus Christ, he is so far at least justified that there was an undoubted advance, as all are agreed, in the conception of God and of human life, say from the Judges downward to the New Testament.[1] Certain steps in advance, from which there was no withdrawal, are easily noted. It was a step forward when Jahweh, the God of Israel, was realized to be the one and only God, the Creator of all that is, in such sense that there could be no other god. It was a step when Amos proclaimed that God, because He is God, must deal impartial judgement upon all

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[1] The Christian Fathers are full of this conception of gradualness in God's creation and in the education of man. They solve in this manner the moral difficulties of the Old Testament. The sign of the success of the divine method, they argue, is that commands which could be given to Abraham or Samuel could not be given to Christians. See passages cited in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 240–2. An interesting instance of advance is Hosea's judgement on Jehu's massacres at Jezreel: see Hos. i. 4, compared to the judgement of the book of Kings.

nations, including Israel and Judah.[1] It was another step when Ezekiel first clearly proclaimed the great principle that God does not merely deal with nations or mankind in social groups, but deals in His absolute justice with each individual.[2] It was again a step when the same Ezekiel overcame the crude antagonism which appears in the earlier prophets between the *cultus* or external and traditional worship on the one hand, and the moral spirit of prophecy on the other, and proceeded to outline a synthesis of spirit and *cultus* by remodelling the traditional worship to be the centre of the social life of the new Israel which he foresaw.[3]

On the other hand, there is retrogression. Thus the visions of Isaiah and of others of a converted world in which Egypt and Assyria shall be included in God's people,[4] gave way on the whole to the visions of apocalyptic judgement in which the adversaries of Israel were to be not converted but overwhelmed in final ruin. And on the whole it has to be said that the prophets who stand at the head of our succession in point of time, Amos and Hosea, Micah and Isaiah, show the prophetic spirit at the full. No presentation of the one God, creator of all that is and righteous judge of all the world, can exceed that of Amos in startling clearness. No picture of the passionate love of God for His people can exceed in fullness and poignancy the teaching of Hosea. And though later prophets show much more clearly the influence of their predecessors—though they "borrow" more plainly—yet none of them show such dependence as to weaken their personal consciousness of divine commission and direct inspiration. But especially is this true of all the prophets down to the restoration. Though now and again they may quote an earlier prophecy, yet unmistakably on the whole each one speaks no borrowed or inherited message, but one which he is entirely convinced is given to him personally by the supreme God.

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[1] Amos ii. 4, 6, iii. 2.

[2] Ezek. xviii.

[3] Ezek. xl. ff.

[4] Isa. xix. 19 ff.

Thus we have in these prophets of Israel something which is not correctly described as a "development" or "evolution" of spiritual truth, if, as is commonly the case, we mean by these words the natural expansion or unfolding of truth, by its own force, from thinker to thinker. What we see is much more accurately described, supposing that the prophets gave a trustworthy account of their experiences, as a process of divine education, which is more or less progressive, but by way of successive lessons or disclosures from above, adapted to the circumstances and capacities of the pupil, not by way of gradual discovery from below.

4. I must insist—and with somewhat more precise definition of the point—that Jesus Christ, whom we consider now without any reference to the question of supernatural personality, simply as a prophet following on John the Baptist, unmistakably took his stand on the prophetic message, both as delivered by the prophets and as embodied in the law, as being truly the word of God. Thus He corrected in its light the tradition of scribes and Pharisees as being "the commandments of men" by contrast to "the word of God"—that is to say, He appealed back behind the ecclesiastical traditions to its fount in the divine revelation of the Old Testament.[1] Not, of course, that He was merely dependent on the Law and the prophets. No: He claimed the right to supersede, on His own

[1] Mark vii. 1–14.

authority, the teaching of the Law. "It was said to them of old time . . . but I say unto you."[1] Again, He recognizes elements of higher and lower in the Mosaic Law, appealing in the case of the Sabbath to its moral purpose behind specific enactments,[2] and in the case of marriage recognizing the moral imperfection of the Mosaic provisions and appealing back to a word of God more original and fundamental.[3] Moreover, in regard to the prophetic teaching about God, He infinitely intensified the idea of God which it conveyed on the side of His personal love to individuals, and He universalized it so that it should apply to man as man and not only to Israel. But when we have given full weight to all these considerations and recognized to the full the personal authority of Jesus as derived from no tradition ("No man knoweth the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him"), there can be no question that He took His stand on the Old Testament revelation as the real utterance of God, and preserved it. In respect of God's personality and His righteousness, His almightiness, His omnipresence, His claim on man—in respect of the responsibility of man and his sinfulness—in respect of the divine purpose of redemption—in respect of the day of judgement and the final reign of God, Jesus Christ takes the Old Testament revelation for granted as God-given.

And it must be noted that our Lord lays no stress upon one important element in the later Jewish tradition—which was perhaps a reflection of Greek philosophy—the doctrine of the divine wisdom or word immanent in nature.[1] This was already established in a measure in the Jewish tradition, and it is welcomed, as by Philo, so also by St. Paul and St. John and the whole Christian Church. But in our Lord's teaching all the stress is on the transcendence and absoluteness of God the Father. And God's relations to the world and to men are described in the most naïvely personal terms.

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[1] Matt. v. 21–2.

[2] Mark ii. 23 ff., iii. 1–6.

[3] Mark x. 1–12.

I have thought it necessary to enter into these preliminary explanations in order, if possible, to prevent a "red herring" being drawn across the path of our argument at a subsequent stage (1) by the suggestion that the very earthly origins of Hebrew prophecy discredit it; or (2) by a mistaken estimate of the prophets as primarily foretellers of the future; or (3) by the inspiration of the prophets being assimilated in a way the facts will not warrant to the natural development of thought from thinker to thinker; or (4) by forgetfulness that in the succession of the Hebrew prophets we must reckon not only John the Baptist but also Jesus of Nazareth.

Now, having so far cleared the ground, we find ourselves again confronting the main question: Are these prophetic conceptions of God and man on which our Christian life is founded—the conception of God as intensely personal, the creator and sustainer of all that exists, the Father and the judge of all created spirits, eternal and unchangeable in His power, His righteousness, and His love, and the accompanying conception of man—his spiritual capacity, his freedom and responsibility, his appalling sinfulness, his opportunity for recovery through the redemptive action of God, his outlook into an immortal life and a reign of God to come,—are these allied conceptions true? Is it true that the prophets, and Jesus Christ the successor of the prophets, were, as they claimed to be, in such close contact with the eternal Reality that they could, in speaking as they did of God and communicating His word to men, "speak that they did know and testify that they had seen" or "heard"? For my own part, having studied the prophets and the Gospels all my life long and asked myself this crucial question more times than I could enumerate, I can give but one answer. I believe their claim is true. It is a momentous decision morally, and it is momentous no less intellectually, because, if I mistake not, it dominates the intellectual situation. What precisely it involves, intellectually considered, and whether it brings us into any real conflict with the fairly certain conclusions of the philosophical reason or of science, we shall be considering shortly with all seriousness. But first of all we have to ask ourselves what other estimates of the prophetic message can be suggested and whether they ought to satisfy us.[1]

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[1] He does, however, fully accept the later tradition concerning spirits good and bad, and concerning personal survival of death, which He declares to be implied in God's relation with the patriarchs.

1. It cannot be even plausibly suggested that we are dealing in the prophets' utterances with intellectual conclusions reached, like the conclusions of the Greek philosophers, by process of reasoning or observation of nature, and liable, like the conclusions of philosophers, to revision by themselves and their successors in the light of subsequent reflection. The Hebrews showed almost no tendency towards philosophical speculation, and the prophets are not like philosophers. They assume the reality of God, the

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[1] In what follows I am following Hamilton's *People of God* (Oxford Press), or rather I am conscious of the impression the argument of his first volume made upon me when he first issued the book.

God of Israel, and that He can communicate with them if He will, and they are convinced that He has done so—in such a manner as leaves quite unsolved a number of questions which profoundly interest philosophers, but apparently have no interest for the prophets; but also in such a manner as supplies them with all the knowledge of God required for practical life, and in such a manner as admits of being rendered into clear propositions about God and His will such as men can understand and must accept or reject. No doubt God may reveal more to those who come after. But they know that what has been given to them so far must be true as God is true.

2. It is also plain that their dominant conviction that God governs the world in justice cannot be what we should call a deduction from experience—the experience of Israel as a nation or of the individual. It is quite true that the Bible is full of assurances, given on divine authority to Israel, that if they will be obedient to God they will be prosperous, and that, on the other hand, disaster will follow disobedience. And we commonly forget how true it is that any nation which as a whole should set itself to obey a lofty moral and social law like that of the Hebrews would indeed be prosperous. But it is the constant testimony of the prophets that Israel has been since the days of the Exodus almost uniformly rebellious, and that the crowning mercies of Jehovah have been bestowed on them not in accordance with their deserts but in spite of them. According to the prophets, at no period has God had a chance of showing what He would do for an obedient people.[1] There are indeed in the

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[1] This is the tone of the prophetic history as a whole: cf. Hos. i., iii., Isa v., Ezek. xvi., xx. 6 ff., xxxvi. 17 f., cf. Ps. lxxviii. 17 ff.

prophets a few appeals to happier experiences like that of Jeremiah to "Shallum the son of Josiah King of Judah"—"Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgement and justice? then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well."[1] But on the other hand the earlier prophets who were contemporary with Jeroboam II witnessed the highest point of Israel's prosperity coinciding with the gross moral degradation which they denounce; and Jeremiah, just before the Captivity, heard the lamentations of those who attributed their disaster to their desertion of the Queen of Heaven, and looked back on their past prosperity as due to her favour when they were faithful to her.[2] And the prophets show no signs of being taken in by evidences of prosperity accompanying moral faithlessness to Jehovah. The fact is that their conviction that national prosperity would always follow obedience to God, and disaster always follow rebellion, is not a conclusion based upon experience, but a conviction that so it must be, if God is God, or a conviction that God has so promised to order national life. And as regards individuals, it was the frequent experience of the righteous man in undeserved affliction, which in part forced the Hebrews forward to the vision of a future life in which God's justice should have room to vindicate itself. Certainly their doctrine of God's justice, though in part it can appeal to experiences, does not vary with their experiences and is not based upon them. It is a conviction established in their souls by what they believed to be the voice of God bearing witness concerning Himself.

3. It used to be more the fashion than it is to-day

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[1] Jer. xxii. 15.

[2] Jer. xliv. 17–18—a vivid passage.

to talk about "the Semitic genius for monotheism," and to treat the Hebrew monotheism as if it were the natural development of the religious tendencies of a certain large group of the human family to which the Israelites belonged. But we know, or can conjecture with a certain measure of certainty, what the religion of Canaan and Moab and Ammon and Edom was. We know how much there was in the instincts and the tradition of Israel inclining them to assimilate and to retain this type of religion, and that the religion of the prophets—their ethical monotheism—only established itself by violent conflict with this "Semitic genius." On a wide view of Semitic religions, a great scholar[1] has described their characteristic on the whole as not "monotheism," but "sexual dualism." Certainly there is nothing in the religion of the races which touched Israel between the Exodus and the Captivity which could in any way account for the prophetic teaching. Again, it is as far as possible from being a reflection, through Moses, of the Egyptian religion. It is markedly contrary to it in all its chief features—its polytheism, its idolatry, its preoccupation with the dead and the world of the dead. Attention has recently been directed to the heretical Egyptian King Akhnaton, and the noble expression which, in his psalm to the Sun's Disk, the only god whom he worshipped, he gives to the idea of the One Lord and Giver of Life. This is indeed a noble utterance, worthy to be set beside the 104th Psalm in the Bible; and it may rightly be used as evidence that divine inspiration was not limited to Israel. But the religion of Akhnaton was killed almost at its birth, and was buried, and so remained till quite recently it was disinterred. It did not affect the Egyptian tradition at all, and it is not reasonable to suggest that it affected Israel. Once more, there were noble Babylonian hymns in which a certain unique majesty and high moral attributes were ascribed to one God, considered for the time apart from all others.[1] But these, again, were probably individual utterances which did not affect the popular polytheism and idolatry, and also no one would suggest that Hebrew prophets before the Exile had any knowledge of them.[2] What elements in their tradition the Jews shared with their neighbours, like the stories of creation and the flood, which were at their root common to them with the Babylonians, were wholly transmuted, in their religious or theological meaning, in the process of being adopted. Of course, in this paragraph I cannot attempt to argue the matter at any length, nor have I the requisite knowledge or authority. But I seem to see a growing disinclination in scholars to question the complete originality of the distinctive prophetic religion, and there is no source which can be plausibly suggested before the Exile from which it could have been either consciously borrowed or unconsciously derived.

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[1] Nöldeke; see Wellhausen's *Prolegomena to the Hist. of Israel* (English trans., Black, 1885), p. 440.

It must, then, be admitted, I think, that the ethical monotheism of the prophets neither was derived from any foreign source nor was anything which the natural genius of the Semitic peoples would be likely to generate.

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[1] This is called "henotheism," as distinct from "monotheism," i.e. exclusive concentration on one God, without denial of the existence of others.

[2] For the Babylonian hymns see Hastings's *Dict. of the Bible*, vol. v, pp. 563 ff. For Akhnaton see Wallis Budge's *Tutankhamen* (Hopkinson, 1923) and J. W. Jack's *The Date of the Exodus*, cap. v.

4. But there is one other "explanation" of the voice of God to the prophets, which is more likely to commend itself to our generation—it is the psychological. "Does the experience of controlling force which the prophet feels really come from some external influence, or is it merely his consciousness of ordinarily unknown depths in his own nature? It is obvious that a theory of prophecy could be made on lines rendered familiar by psychologists, by suggesting that what happens in a prophetic experience is the sudden 'coming up' of what is ordinarily subliminal."[1] Something of this sort is constantly being suggested to us in the name of psychology—that what prophets and seers and religious people have taken for divine voices or influences are really only the occasional "uprushes," whether in a state of trance or without any such suppression of normal consciousness, of what is ordinarily kept outside consciousness, buried in the region of the unconscious mind—a vaster region than that of our consciousness—assuming the form of an independent consciousness or a different person from ourselves communicating with us.

Now, there can be no doubt that this unconscious or subconscious or subliminal region of mind is a very important fact, which psychology to-day is fulfilling an exceedingly important function in investigating. My mind is, it appears, much wider than my present consciousness. Thus it is quite certain that we retain the record of much more of our experiences than we consciously remember at any moment, whether we interpret this fact in physiological terms (as in Dr. Carpenter's theory of "unconscious cerebration") or more purely pyschologically. Perhaps everything that has happened to us, or been willed or imagined or done by us, is somewhere unconsciously remembered and may be one day consciously disclosed. Uprushes from the unconscious memory occur to all of us.[1] And besides being a storing-place for our personal experiences, it appears to be certain that the unconscious mind is also what Bergson terms a "racial memory"—that therein are stored hereditary instincts, tendencies, and capacities, such as are not merely individual, and yet constitute the background, the deeply influential background, of our individual and conscious life. So it must be that there subsist in us, with varying degrees of force, ancient savage and animal tendencies and instincts, such as conscious reason has tended to submerge and exclude (more and more completely the more rational and self-conscious our life becomes), but which are never quite extinguished. Here may lie normally disused faculties of telepathy and intuition into natural forces, which some animals and savages appear to possess, and which certain individuals among us appear to recover or exercise in normal or abnormal states. It is also the case that in certain abnormal individuals the uprushes from the unconscious take the form of a "co-consciousness," that is, the appearance of being another person different from ourselves, though "the co-conscious, so far as the evidence goes, is either non-existent or practically negligible in normal persons; while in pathological subjects, though sometimes, indeed, the source of valuable ideas and useful actions, it is always limited and inferior to the waking self, and likely to be very far from beautiful or sublime."[1]

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[1] Kirsopp Lake, *Landmarks of the Early Church* (Macmillan, 1920), p. 43.

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[1] I suppose that the two forms in which the existence of the unconscious mind is most vividly brought to our notice are: (1) the uprushes of memory from a region outside one's present consciousness, which in part we can and in part we cannot control. Thus, if I struggle to remember a name and fail to do so, I am powerless. But when I have ceased to struggle, it often presents itself unexpectedly after a time, as from a hidden field of memory. (2) When I have struggled with some intellectual problem and brought my mind to a state where the solution seems to be appearing and yet disappears in confusion, if I can get a night's rest, the chances are that the tangle disappears in a measure, and order appears with the morning. In such ways we become conscious that our mind is larger than our field of consciousness. But there is no tendency in these normal experiences for the subliminal mind to appear as a co-consciousness or another person.

Now, granted all this, it is obvious how much in spiritism, and in the lower forms of prophecy and divination, such as those familiar in and around early Israel, may be explained in terms of the subconscious.[2] It is obvious also how vast an influence the subconscious exercises upon all our religious tendencies.[3] But so far the subconscious or unconscious region appears as containing only what our personal experiences or the age-long experiences of our race or its animal progenitors have stored within it. But when I set myself to consider the message of the Biblical prophets, which they believe to have been directly inspired into them by God, it seems to me absurd to seek to interpret this as the echo of tradition or instinct stored in the unconscious. We need not discuss whether the new voice was first heard by Moses or by Amos, at any rate the racial tradition knew it not, and it never succeeded in becoming the tradition till after the Captivity, when the succession of the prophets ceased. And the message of each prophet in the succession of prophets, such as Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, gains its power not only from its intense individuality, but also from the obvious elements of novelty in each. In each case the voice was intensely individual, and the message in some respects markedly new—something which the human race had not heard before. Moreover, the communication between the prophet's consciousness and the mysterious Power which addresses itself to him is carried on in the highest region of clear consciousness and will. Thus, as the communication claims to be, so also on close enquiry it appears to be, from above—from what is higher than the personal consciousness of the prophets, not from what is lower. A great deal too much is made of the fact that Ezekiel [1] and St. Paul—the one more often than the other—fell into trances, during which, in some manner, their spirits were awake while their bodies were not. This did not apparently occur in the case of most of the prophets; and the message which Ezekiel and St. Paul delivered was a message addressed to their will and conscious intelligence, and by their will and conscious intelligence received and delivered. I see, therefore, no evidence at all making it plausible to suggest that what presented itself to them was really—though they mistook its nature—their unconscious mind. Whence did the unconscious mind get this astonishing series of messages? It does not lie within the compass of the materials out of which, as far as we can judge, it is and must be formed.[1] In other words, it seems infinitely more probable that it was "a downrush from the super-conscious"—the voice of the Spirit of God, as the prophets themselves so imperiously insist.

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[1] Pratt's *The Religious Consciousness* (Macmillan Co., New York, 1920), pp. 59–60.

[2] I think, for instance, that the "word of the Lord" commanding Israel to destroy Amalek, and Jehu to destroy the whole house of Ahab, would, if the supposed divine communications had reached no higher level, have been of a piece with the "word of Chemosh" to Mesha King of Moab, and would have admitted of a very natural "explanation." It is only because of what Israel's religion was to become under the leadership of the great prophets that we are naturally disposed to see a higher meaning and purpose even in its lower stages.

[3] Pratt, *op. cit.*, pp. 61–3.

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[1] In Ezekiel we appear to have extraordinarily interesting instances of telepathy—perception in the remote region by the river Chebar of scenes occurring in Jerusalem.

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Every man must draw his own conclusion as to the nature or source of the prophets' inspiration. It can be done only by a reverent and continuous reading of at least large portions of their writings, though we may pass lightly over the obscure passages and pay the deepest attention to what we can easily understand, without losing anything of chief importance in their message. We have to take note both of the individuality and distinctiveness of the message of each of the prophets and of the continuity of the teaching through their whole succession. We have to pay regard to the resumption of the prophetic message by John the Baptist and its consummation in Jesus

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[1] See Pratt, p. 64. What is highest "in the religious genius is to be sought in his conscious states rather than in some form of insensibility. . . . It is difficult to see why God should choose to communicate with a split-off complex . . . rather than with the man himself." . . . "Hence the emphasis I have put on the absurdity of looking to the subconscious as nobler and purer than the conscious self." Of course we must recognize that the forms or scenery of the prophet's vision come from their traditions and their experiences. What I am speaking of is not the form of the visions, but their moral and spiritual content.

Christ. Then we have to ask ourselves the great question: Can we ascribe the message to any lower source than that to which the prophets themselves ascribe it? I do not think we can.

As to the psychological method of the divine communication, we may be as ignorant as we generally are of the psychological conditions under which artists and poets and mystics attain their intuitions. But of the source of the communications, as coming really and directly from God, I dare to feel certain. And I am bound to go on to consider the intellectual consequences of this momentous conclusion. For the communications to the prophets had the sort of vivid reality which required them to state what they "heard" in the form of propositions or messages appealing to the intellect as well as to the will. That is to say, they carry inevitably intellectual conclusions.

And I am sure that in the consideration of the truth of the prophetic testimony we must not leave out of account the effect of their teaching on those who accepted it, and that on the widest and most permanent field. It is impossible not to feel that men who exhibit a quite new power in life are thereby proved to have got into closer touch with reality. And if this new power appears as a direct consequence of a theological belief, the new power so far accredits the belief. Buddhism and Mohammedanism and Stoicism liberated new human power to deal with life, and doubtless in proportion to the truth which was in them. But I believe that the spirit of Jewish prophecy and that towards which it led—the spirit of Christianity in its most genuine form all down the ages, the spirit of sonship in Christ—exhibits human nature at its best and richest. Something has occurred for which only the experience of the prophets and the witness of Christ can account, and without which the moral treasures of human nature would be vastly impoverished. This was especially evident in the first days when Christianity stood in marked contrast to the world which surrounded it; but the impression is not much less vivid wherever we see genuine Christianity in a group or a family or an individual. The Christian impresses us as pre-eminently capable in virtue of his faith of dealing with the circumstances and sufferings and tasks of life in a spirit of liberty—with the courage, hope, and joy of a son in his father's household—unperplexed and undismayed. And he draws this power from what is distinctive about his faith in God. Thus it was that when the Christian Church came out into the Graeco-Roman world, it proved itself so combative, not merely for *some* belief in God, but for its own distinctive belief. It would not be content with the philosophic belief in God as the soul or reason in all things. It demanded the belief, which the prophets and Christ had taught it, in God the absolute Creator, who is also the absolute Love—in the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ—in the God of whom Jesus Christ is the living image in human form. Christian humility, Christian enterprise, Christian love, the Christian sense of supremacy over all evil influences and powers, the Christian hope, the assurance of the Kingdom, all depended upon—not any form of theism, but the specific Hebrew belief. And it is still so dependent. The God which current philosophy to-day on the whole offers us would never of itself supply the motive and the vision which the distinctive Christian character peremptorily needs; and this is specially obvious if we consider the moral needs and capacities of ordinary men and women. It is chiefly among them that the Christian faith—which is the Hebrew faith perfected—where it is genuine, vindicates the truth of its premises by the fruits which it shows in life.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTENTS OF THE PROPHETIC FAITH

WE find ourselves now in this position—that we have deliberately, even if still provisionally,[1] accepted the reality of God's disclosure of Himself through the Hebrew prophets and Jesus Christ. Thus we assent (so far) to the statement with which the Epistle to the Hebrews begins, that "God in many parts and many manners spake in old times unto the fathers by the prophets and in these last times by His Son," though no question concerning the person of Jesus Christ—as to whether He differs from the prophets in being the Divine Son—has yet been raised.

This self-disclosure of God was given, through the prophets and Jesus Christ, for a practical purpose—as a "word of life," that men might know how to live if they would be in fellowship with God. Thus there are many questions which have always troubled speculative philosophers of which the prophets appear to be quite unconscious. But life and thought cannot be separated in a rational being, such as man is. If he must live in a certain way in order to please God or be at peace with Him, that must be, he feels, because God Himself has a certain character or nature.

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[1] Because we have still to consider whether any irreconcilable conflict, such as would throw into confusion our whole conception of truth, is going to appear between the substance of the professed self-disclosure of God and the rest of our rational knowledge.

And, in fact, the divine self-disclosure assumes constantly this form—" Be thou holy, for I am holy." There may be many things concerning God which are not disclosed because they have no practical bearing on life, or because they pass human comprehension. This is what St. Paul suggests when he says, " We know in part." Again, the expression given of the being and nature of God may be naïvely given and not in the way of precise intellectual definition, or it may be presented in figure and metaphor, because it can be so more effectively presented as guidance to the plain man. And this involves perplexities from the point of view of the speculative understanding. This is what St. Paul means when he says " we see through a glass darkly," that is " like a reflection in a mirror, in dark sayings." Nevertheless, in St. Paul's view, all is not dark. Far from it. Our life is to be lived in the light. It is to be based on the luminous convictions that God is one; that everything that exists He made and controls; that He is awfully and inexorably righteous, but nevertheless ungrudging, self-sacrificing, love; that He takes constant care of each man and loves each with an individual love; that His purpose at the last resort for each and all is redemption and salvation; that there is a Kingdom of God already in being and still to come in full perfection. These are practical truths, but they are only practical—that is, practically effective—so long as they are believed to be true; and they can only be believed to be true if they can be taken as propositions for the intellect, propositions dealing with reality, like the propositions we frame about nature, of course with due regard to their limits in each particular case.

In recognizing this we are deliberately traversing certain tendencies in contemporary philosophy. There are schools of philosophy[1] which bid religion take all it needs in the way of truths about God for granted. They are "facts for faith." They are the presuppositions of religious experience. They can be assumed as true. But they must not be translated into philosophical or historical or scientific propositions. There is to be no connexion between the truths of religious faith on the one hand and historical science or physical science or metaphysical philosophy on the other. But this is impossible. Religious experience, like every kind of experience, if it is not a delusion, is experience of reality, it is reality as felt.[2] If what religion feels it does not at the same time know to belong to the world of reality, with which the man of science and the historian and the philosopher are also dealing, it must cease to feel it. It is only the consciousness of objective reality which can keep the feeling in being. And our religious nature cannot 9. be secluded in a water-tight compartment from our scientific or rational nature. Thus our present task is twofold. We must first (1) discover what are the intellectual propositions about God and man which the prophetic revelation plainly and unmistakably postulates as real and valid. And secondly (2) we must consider whether these propositions are in harmony with the conclusions of philosophy and science, that is to say, whether there is a synthesis either attained or attainable between faith and knowledge. The former of these enquiries will occupy this chapter.

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[1] I am referring of course to the Ritschlian school of theologians and the philosophical pragmatists: no doubt they have done good service in vindicating the right of religion and morality to make the postulates necessary for their maintenance and development. Cf. Dr. Bradley: "The ideas which best express our highest religious needs and their satisfaction, must certainly be true" (*Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 431). But it is idle to tell us to make the necessary postulates if we are told that these necessary assumptions are destitute of reality from the point of view of science or history or metaphysics. It cannot, we feel, be done. I should like to refer my readers to *Faith and Facts, a Study of Ritschlianism*, by Ernest Edghill (Macmillan, 1910), a young scholar whose loss we have every reason to deplore.

[2] As to the question of grades of reality something is said below (pp. 176, 292). I am here thinking, not of Dr. Bradley or Lord Haldane, but of the pragmatists.

1. *The Personality of God.*—What we mean by this term lies at the very heart of all that the prophets taught. Their God is not an abstract quality to contemplate, such as beauty, justice, truth; but a being of deliberate will and energetic action, approving and disapproving, loving and hating, judging and blessing; who not only can respond to man's advances and prayers, but who from the beginning has been, and always is, taking the initiative in willing and acting; whose will is to be discerned behind everything that happens and working through everything that happens, yet who also appears as acting more intensely here than there, in the execution of particular, individual purposes. There can be no question about the truth of this conception of God if, in any real sense, the experience of the prophets is an experience of reality. For it is its very heart and substance.

Of course we may say—nay, we must say—that the human personality is an inadequate image of the divine personality. We may prefer to call Him supra-personal. We may lay stress upon the necessary element of metaphor in all human language about Him. But we are bound to recognize the fundamental intellectual implication of the whole experience of the prophets—that God is, in some supreme and transcendent sense, all that we mean when we speak of a person. The Old Testament, as is well known, used "anthropomorphic" terms about God freely—that is, it runs the risk of lowering the conception of God sooner than suffer Him to be thought of as an abstraction or an idea.

There was a tendency, no doubt, in later Judaism, from an excessive sense of the transcendence of God, to shrink from the use of the personal name Jahweh, and to speak rather of "the heavens" or "the Blessed One"; but it is noticeable that our Lord, by His habitual use of the term "Father" for God, and the associations He attached to it, brought back the emphasis upon His personality. The Father is one who wills and does, not merely all things in general, but particular things, who goes out to seek and save individual souls—in short, who is a person.

Mr. Clement Webb has recently said that "it was in connexion with the doctrine of the Trinity that the words 'person' and 'personality' came to be used of the Divine Being," and that though personality *in* God is the orthodox Christian doctrine, to speak of the personality *of* God has a suggestion of the unitarian heresy.[1] Now, it is true that the *terms* for personality, whether in Greek or Latin, were only elaborated in this connexion. But Christianity felt the importance of personality, both in man and in God, before it found a term to express the idea. And the personality of the one God was surely a central idea of the prophetic religion which Christianity inherited long before any question was raised about personal distinction in the Godhead.[2]

2. *God (Jehovah) as the Absolute Being.*—Whatever

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[1] *God and Personality* (Allen & Unwin, 1918), p. 61, etc.

[2] Indeed, Mr. Webb admits this (p. 85): "Few would hesitate to describe Judaism as a religion with a personal God."

exists, according to the message of the prophets, is from God as its author, and in Him as its sustainer, and in some sense expresses Him. Everything depends on God so that ultimately there is no power but God's power. There is no rival power, external to Him. In some sense He is the doer of all that is done. "I am Jehovah and there is none else; beside me there is no god; I will gird thee [King Cyrus], though thou hast not known me; that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me; I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil[1]; I am the Lord that doeth all these things."[2] "The whole earth is full of his glory." "Whither shall I go then from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"[3] This absoluteness of God is the jubilant proclamation of all the prophets; and the New Testament reiterates it. "Without him (the Word who is God) was not anything made." "All things have been created through him and unto him, and in him all things consist."[4] "In him we live and move and have our being."[5] It is only to say this in other words to say that the constant assumption of the prophets of the Old and New Testaments is the divine omnipotence—that is, the summary power of God over and in all things that exist.

But to this teaching of the divine absoluteness there are two qualifications. (*a*) The first, which will be dealt with later from another point of view, but must be referred to here, is that, in willing to create hosts of free beings, God has willed to submit

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[1] I.e. cause calamity; see below.

[2] Isa. xlv. 5–7.

[3] Isa. vi. 3; Ps. cxxxix. 7.

[4] John i. 3; Col. i. 16–17.

[5] Acts xvii. 28.

Himself to a most important limitation of His omnipotence. The free beings may rebel, and in fact have rebelled, against God, and ignored God, and their wilfulness and insolence and consequent ignorance of God have on the vastest scale disordered God's world, in which they were appointed His vicegerents. And God has not overruled their liberty because it was misused, but submits Himself to their misuse of their powers, which are at bottom His, so that in Isaiah's tremendous phrase already referred to, He is made to serve by their sins.[1] Thus He appears in the world's history as one weak and defeated: "He delivers his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemies' hand."[2] He appears as contending for His own cause under every kind of disadvantage, and suffering in the sufferings of His faithful people—a "limited" God indeed, though self-limited by His own choice in creating free beings, not limited by any external power; a suffering God even in the Old Testament. "In all the afflictions of his people, he was afflicted."[3] Also He is represented as a God who, because He has made men His vicegerents, must appeal to His people for their help: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"[4] No doubt the conception throughout the Bible is that there can be no final failure of God or of His cause. Because God is God, He must "come into His own" in the whole of His universe; and each insolent power in turn must be overwhelmed. These epiphanies of divine power are the "days of the Lord," and there is to be a final "day."

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[1] Isa. xliii. 24.

[2] Ps. lxxviii. 61. The words in the Prayer Book version, "*their* power . . . *their* beauty," are a mere mistake.

[3] Isa. lxiii. 9.

[4] Isa. vi. 8.

The Bible never allows us to forget that. Nevertheless God's long-continued meekness, or self-submission to be defeated and to suffer at the hands of His own creatures, constitutes an even startling limitation upon the conception of His absoluteness. And it ought to be remarked that increasingly after the Captivity and in the New Testament the universe is conceived of as the dwelling-place of hosts of free spirits other than men, some of whom have misused their freedom at least as fully and disastrously as men; so that the struggle for right must be regarded as universal—far beyond the limits of human activity. "We wrestle [and God wrestles in us] against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."[1]

(*b*) And there is another limitation of the divine absoluteness as represented in the Old Testament to which we need to give careful attention. Absoluteness, involving omnipotence, may be represented as arbitrariness. If God is personally the doer of everything at every moment, there might be imagined to be no limit to what might happen—nothing that we could calculate upon. But that God's will is the law of nature, and God's will is constant and covenanted, was affirmed in the prophetic religion throughout. "He has made a decree [for nature] which shall not pass away."[1] This sense of the inherent order of nature—"laws of nature" in the modern sense—grew in the later period of Israel's history, perhaps under Greek influence. Thus in the Wisdom literature,[2] the order of nature is represented as the influence of the Divine Wisdom (personified) "reaching from one end of all things unto the other, mightily and sweetly ordering all things." The idea suggested is that the principle of order lies in the Divine Being Himself, and inasmuch as "the being of God is a kind of law to His working,"[3] so God can do nothing arbitrarily or foolishly, any more than He could "deny Himself" by doing wrongly. Thus the sense of the divine absoluteness and omnipotence is conditioned by the sense that God is self-limited by His own being, and that we can know for certain that neither unrighteousness nor disorder is possible to Him.[4]

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[1] Eph. vi. 12. The conception of Satan and his angels as rebels, like men but before men, misusing their legitimate powers, becomes dominant in later Judaism. It is the assumption of the New Testament, it being inconceivable that God could have created spirits to be evil. If the devils are what they are, that must be because they, like man, are sinners (1 John iii. 8, John viii. 44). In the Biblical view there can be no essentially evil nature. The morally evil things can be only good things misused; and the morally evil spirits only good spirits become rebellious.

Thus man, as made in God's image, both rational and moral, has within himself a certain standard by which to judge of God. In magnificent passages of the prophets God is represented as appealing to man to recognize and vindicate the justice of His actions.[5] The Bible, we may say, justifies John Stuart Mill in his famous refusal to call God righteous if His action did not respond to the ultimate demand of the human conscience. It is true that at moments the awful sense of the divine greatness and the pettiness and short-sightedness of man overwhelms the feelings of the Biblical writers, so as to make all human criticism seem foolish and blasphemous. Thus the great answer of God out of the whirlwind to Job seems to be a mere appeal to His transcendent power. But this is not the only or the chief impression the book of Job leaves on us. The chief impression is of the unconquerable strength of the appeal for justice on the part of the innocent and helpless sufferer; and even after the overwhelming appeal to the divine omnipotence, the great dramatist cannot draw to his conclusion without making God satisfy the requirement of human justice, in the most naïve fashion, by restoring to Job more than his former prosperity.

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[1] Ps. cxlviii. 6; cf. Gen. viii. 22, ix. 16.

[2] See, e.g., Prov. viii. 22–30, Wisdom vii. 17–viii. 1.

[3] Hooker, *E. P.*, bk. i, ii, 2.

[4] In Isa. xxviii. 23–4 there is a very subtle appreciation of the divine wisdom, both in its unity of purpose and variety of application, as illustrated in the parable of the husbandman.

[5] Isa. v. 3–4, Micah vi. 2 ff., Ezek. xviii. 25; cf. Ps. li. 4.

Or, again, we find St. Paul in the New Testament sharply rebuking the Jew who dared to criticize the justice of God, if He really had, as St. Paul said He had, disinherited in its main bulk His own chosen race—" Who art thou that repliest against God? . . . Hath not the potter a right over the clay?" But we must pay attention to the main point of St. Paul's argument. What St. Paul is refuting is a claim on the part of the Jew really destructive of all morality, viz. that God had so tied Himself to one race as to be bound to show it preference, however it might behave. St. Paul, then, is asserting God's absolute liberty, not to override moral distinctions, but to ignore a merely racial claim; and the end of his argument is a vindication of the justice and graciousness of God's world-wide purpose.[1]

On the whole we must recognize that the omnipotence of God is in the prophetic teaching the opposite of arbitrary. It must correspond with certain principles of order and justice which have their seat in the being of God Himself.

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[1] See Rom. ix.–xi. I have worked this point out in an *Exposition* of the Romans (Murray), vol. ii. pp. 1–14.

3. *The Moral Perfection of God.*—In the pagan religions it was common to represent a God as formidable in an arbitrary or irrational sense: so that he should be carefully provided with all that he is accustomed to require, without asking why, and be hedged about with tabus lest he should "break out" upon his worshipping people, like a physical plague. It cannot be denied that this sort of conception appears in the earlier stages of Israel's religion.[1] But in the prophetic religion the sense of the divine holiness is purged from such unworthy physical associations and has become absolutely spiritual. The fear of the Lord is no irrational fear of something unaccountable, but a rational awe in the presence of one whose character is known. God is absolutely righteous—of purer eyes than to behold iniquity: inexorably and impartially just. If clouds and darkness are still round about Him, yet there is no doubt about the quality of His will, "righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his seat." And there is with Him no respect of persons, no favouritism of His own people such as could lead Him to ignore their sins; and no possibility of error in His judgements, for He sees men's hearts and knows their most secret thoughts. But though He is thus awful in His holiness, there is an equal emphasis upon His love. This appears in the intensest form in the manner in which Hosea is bidden to symbolize the love of God for His own people,[2] and there is no need to dwell long on what everyone would admit, that at the climax of the self-disclosure of God, Jesus Christ represents Him—

[1] See Exod. xix. 22, 24; 2 Sam. vi. 8.

[2] In his relations to his adulterous wife; see Hos. i., ii.

not less than before as unalterably righteous and tremendous in His holiness, for the Gospels are very severe books, but as unquestionably love—self-sacrificing love—love that goes out to every individual to seek him and to save him.[1] The limitations and the imperfections of the Old Testament conception of divine love, which are conspicuous in its earlier stages, are here quite obliterated. The love of God is active and universal. Its "jealousy" remains, because God cannot endure to see men wasting themselves on things that cannot profit, but it has in it no element of grudging, and covers with its sanction and blessing all uses of life which are within the wide purpose of God. The final summary expression of the character of God is St. John's phrase, "God is love." Where God is, love is: and where love is, God is: and the end of all things is to be the victory of love.

There are profound difficulties in the way of receiving this comforting doctrine of the goodness of God which some of us in our day feel acutely. Some of these modern difficulties—such as that which arises from the vast amount of animal pain in the world—the believers of the Old and New Testaments hardly seem to have felt at all. With others—such as the sufferings of innocent men—they obviously wrestled. When we are considering[2] whether the doctrine of divine love can be accepted without violence to reason, we shall naturally ask whether the Bible, Old Testament and New, assists us to a solution of our difficulties. But for the present we are only considering what the Biblical doctrine of God affirms. Certainly, then, it affirms that the absolute and supreme Being is perfect righteousness and ungrudging love. And certainly this doctrine is presented not as an argument to convince us, but as a word of God Himself to be believed and realized in the responsive experience of faith.

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[1] Not long before our Lord's time the love of God for every individual was beautifully expressed in the Book of Wisdom xi. 23: "For thou hast mercy on all men, because thou hast power to do all things, and thou overlookest the sins of men to the end they may repent. For thou lovest all things that are, and abhorrest none of the things that thou didst make; for never wouldest thou have formed anything if thou didst hate it. . . . But thou sparest all things because they are thine, O sovereign Lord, thou lover of souls."

[2] See below, pp. 156 ff.

4. *God the Creator.*—As has been already noticed, the prophetic conception of God insisted upon His presence everywhere, as the spirit of life and order in all things. Hence it coalesced easily with the philosophic doctrine of the divine reason immanent in the world, which occupied the minds of thinking men when the Christian religion began its course. But this popular philosophy got no farther than this recognition of a rational soul or spirit of the world; or if it did conceive of God as transcendent, He was so transcendent as to be inaccessible, abstract, and indifferent to men. But the God who reveals Himself to the prophets is indeed intimately concerned in all things that are, but in Himself is absolutely distinct from them as their Creator.

Indeed, the intensely personal and moral conception of God which possessed the prophets made impossible to them any confusion of God with nature. It lifted Him into absolute distinctness or transcendence.

This idea is vividly expressed in the prophetic horror of idolatry. The prophets almost weary us by their alternate denunciation and ridicule of idolatry. Philosophy has been generally able to make terms with idolatry. God is in all things—that is the farthest point to which it can get. Therefore, though the popular myths about the gods are childish and foolish, it can sympathize with the tendency to see God in this and that. Only in this and that can the vulgar worship the All in all. This philosophic tendency to tolerate idolatry is familiar in ancient times, and it is obvious in the sympathetic attitude towards idolatry of a great many moderns.[1]

They show themselves restive under the denunciations of idolatry alike of the ancient prophets and the modern missionaries. But such denunciations are inseparable from the prophetic belief which will tolerate no confusion of the creature with the Creator, of nature with God. However true it be that God is everywhere, yet the first thought of Him must be as absolutely distinct from everything. Whatever be the grades of creation, yet these distinctions of higher and lower are as nothing compared with the absolute distinction between the Creator and the works of His hands. What inspires the prophetic denunciation of idolatry is the feeling that it involves a senseless insult to the Creator by confusing Him with His creatures. 6

So also the idea of God as Creator lies at the heart of their claim for humility in man, and their denunciation of pride. If, as pantheistic philosophy conceived, a man, in respect of his reason, is a part of the universal reason or God, destined ultimately, after all the defilements and hindrances due to his temporary incarceration in the body, to return to the Divine Being, humility might seem a grovelling quality unworthy of a rational being, and pride a legitimate expression of his true nature, God and man being essentially one interdependent being. But all this mode of conceiving the relation of man to God is by the prophets rendered impossible. Man is not a part of God, but the creature of God. His relation to God is one of absolute dependence, as for the beginning of his existence so moment by moment for its continuance. This is the ground of humility. This is what makes all pride or boasting preposterous. And if humility is in effect nothing less than a servile spirit, that is because God has been pleased to make man in His own image and likeness, to admit him to His friendship, and to make him His vicegerent in the world which he inhabits.[1]

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[1] See Pratt's *Religious Consciousness*, p. 276: "Much more may thus be said in defence of the practice of 'idolatry' than most of us have been brought up to suppose. It is based upon a perfectly sound psychological principle, and it appeals to a widely felt human need."

Once more, the transcendence of God the Creator involves His unconditional spirituality. He is present in all things but unconfused. Implicated in no conditions of time and space, and essentially tied to no requirements of any special sanctuary, "God is spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."[2] And again we must notice that if the Jewish thought of God is gradually lifted to this highest level, it is not by the process of reasoned reflection, but by the way of inspired utterances. "Thus saith the high and holy one that inhabiteth eternity."[3]

5. *The Freedom of Man.*—But how, then, if God is the Creator, responsible for the existence of all that is, is His character for goodness to be maintained in view of the evil and misery of the world? The answer of the prophets to this portentous question

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[1] Cf. the mixture of humility with exultation in Ps. viii. or in the Magnificat of Mary.

[2] John iv. 24.

[3] Isa. lvii. 15.

is, if not complete, yet simple, and, as has been said, it is expressed or implied everywhere. It attributes the mass of evil in the world to the lawlessness of rebel wills—to pride, greediness, ambition, cruelty, selfishness, jealousy, lust; and to the judgements which those things bring upon individuals and upon the world, whether as their natural results or (what is perhaps only their natural results viewed from a different angle) as the punishment for sin which God inflicts.

There can be no question that this is the general account which the prophetic scriptures give of the presence of evil in the world. St. James, who speaks in the New Testament in the prophetic spirit, describes how the ungoverned human tongue, though it be a little member, yet can disorder a whole world, setting on fire the divinely-ordered course of nature.[1] The sins which inspire the tongue are jealousy and rivalry. But what James says so truly of these particular sins acting through human speech, generalized so as to apply to all sin, expresses the common mind of the prophets. And when St. James further speaks of the fire of the tongue as kindled from hell or "devilish" he is, again, representing the common belief of later Judaism which, as confirmed by Jesus Christ, the New Testament writers share, that the source and home of evil is to be found beyond the circle of human nature in an unseen world of free spirits.

We should note that the insistence of the prophets, and of the scriptures inspired by their teaching, upon the reality of human freedom is unhesitating, and is allowed to condition their doctrine, not only of

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[1] James iii. 6; see Hort's suggestive notes.

God's omnipotence (as already pointed out), but in a measure also of His omniscience.

Everyone who thinks at all feels the acuteness of the question: If God knows to-day, and indeed from all eternity, what I am going to do to-morrow, how can I be really free? To me it seems that in this sense belief in divine foreknowledge really is incompatible, according to any standard of thinking possible to us in our present state, with belief in human freedom. I can recognize that the whole conception of absolute and eternal knowledge is totally outside our present faculties. But within the region of our present capacities for thinking, the two beliefs are incompatible, and it is to our present thinking that the word of God in the Bible is directed. The Bible, then, does not concern itself with the metaphysical question. It contents itself with saying, "At any rate, you are free and responsible." That God is powerful over all and in all, and does not for a moment allow the world or any single man to escape out of His control, that He knows everything that is or can be, and discerns infallibly the thoughts of men's hearts and their tendencies—all this it would be easy to "prove from Scripture." Also that individual men like Judas, or classes of men, may have so fundamentally chosen evil that they have no longer ears to hear or wills to choose freely, and that their actions are foreknown and predetermined—this also appears as true but as abnormal. On the whole God is represented as waiting on man, pleading with man, being disappointed in man ("I looked that my vineyard should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes"); and it is impossible to "prove from Scripture" that God knows generally how the individual man is going to choose on each particular occasion. I repeat, the overruling of God is always maintained. No will or action passes out of His hands. All the disorder that wilful men or spirits can cause is, as we may say, superficial. Under it and over it and beyond it is the everlasting power and wisdom. Nevertheless, within the scope of the universal providence room is left for free spirits to act. And God, so to speak, keeps far enough aloof to let them act freely. And at least His word never lets them suppose that He knows beforehand what they will do.

Whether philosophy or science can raise any valid objection to the doctrine of real human freedom is another question which we shall shortly have to face. Here our sole object is to ask what is the intellectual presentation involved in the Bible.[1]

6. *The Day of the Lord and the World to Come.*—As has been said already, though the prophets recognize so frankly the lawless liberty of men to thwart God's purpose and disorder His world, there is no doubt of the sovereignty of God—that He allows no fragment of His world to pass out of His control; and, because He is God, He must vindicate Himself at last. Thus the prophets contemplate unmoved the vast structures raised by human insolence—"the giant forms of empires"—and speak against them, and against every rebellious individual, the oracles of God which announce their inevitable doom. And in the later stages of prophecy, as on the lips of Christ and in the New Testament as a whole, the whole vista of history is represented as closing in the Day of the Lord when God is to come into His own in His whole universe. This is a Day of judgment and doom on all that has refused God, and a day of realization—the perfect

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[1] On St. Paul's doctrine of divine "foreknowledge," see my *Ephesians*, p. 66.

kingdom or reign of God—for all that responds to Him. In the earlier stages of Israel's history, they were taught to look for the vindication of God's purpose here and now in this world. There was no glimpse of a life beyond. But as the sense of individuality and of the worth of the individual soul developed in Israel, and the accompanying sense of personal fellowship with God, such as appears in so intense a form in the Psalms, a wider horizon than this world became a necessity. If God was just, then there must be a life beyond in which He would vindicate the justice which was plainly not vindicated in "the wild and irregular scene" of this world. Again, if the soul of man was admitted here and now to the fellowship of God, then this divine fellowship, in part gained here, must be realized hereafter. So before the close of the Jewish canon the doctrine of the resurrection and of the world to come has taken possession of the Jewish conscience, and it gains consistency and definiteness in the New Testament. We shall have to return to the matter at a later stage, when we come to consider the full Christian faith. Here all that is needed is the recognition that the message of the prophets about divine justice and "the day of the Lord" was found to involve the belief in a resurrection of the dead and of a world to come, and that Jesus Christ in His teaching gave to these already established doctrines His explicit and solemn confirmation.

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Let it be said again, the whole teaching of the prophets was given for a practical and not a speculative purpose. It was a "word of life," a message as to how men must live. So also Christianity came out into the world as "the way." It was a life before it was a doctrine. But it was a life which involved a whole body of truths about God and man: and though these are affirmed for a practical purpose, they are none the less affirmed as true. They must be true in fact—and therefore truths for the intellect—or the life proposed becomes impossible.

Now we have been asking what are the intellectual propositions which the prophets insist upon as the word of God, and we have found them to be especially these: that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is personal; that He is the absolute Being, beside whom there can be none other; that He is in character perfect holiness and love; that He is absolutely distinct from all His creatures as their Creator; that He has given to His creature man, and to other orders of spirits dimly perceived, such moral freedom and responsibility as admit of their co-operation with God or of their resisting and thwarting Him on the widest scale; but that as God is God He must fully vindicate Himself over and in all His creation, if not in this world, then in the world to come.

Now, it cannot be denied that if these propositions, which the prophets reiterate as being the word of God, are really the legitimate expression in human language of God's own self-disclosure—that is, of impressions, convictions, images, and communications really wrought by God into the prophets' souls and minds—a whole new body of facts and data is added to the material on which philosophy must work. The "word of God" must plainly be received in faith. It is not the product of human reasoning. But so accepted as true, it can be and must be the basis of a fresh philosophy. So the Christian Church—which inherited the prophetic teaching, as it was renewed and deepened in Christ—showed itself at home in the highly intellectual and philosophical world of the

Graeco-Roman Empire. It showed itself a body as well able to think philosophically as to live and die nobly. Among its men of greater intellect it had no one equal to the greatest of the Greeks—Plato or Aristotle or, perhaps, Plotinus—but it had, especially among its Greek Fathers, men capable of acute intellectual and philosophical discrimination. It was able to assimilate and also to revise, add to and correct the ideas of current philosophy. Thus out of the treasures of its faith it enriched philosophy with a deeply enhanced sense of personality as the most ultimate and important of categories; it assimilated the conception of divine immanence in nature, but also it contended strenuously for the conception of the transcendent Creator independent and complete in Himself; it used the conception of the Trinity in God to make rational and intelligible the thought of a God eternally alive and complete in Himself without dependence upon His creation for self-expression; it emphasized the idea of human freedom; it firmly fixed in the will and not in the flesh the source and ground of sin; it introduced among men the pregnant thought of the world as a scene in which a divine purpose is slowly and progressively realized; it showed Greek philosophy a way of escape from the embarrassing dualism of matter and spirit. Thus it enriched and stimulated philosophy while it used it to gain intellectual coherence and expression for its faith. And if it made mistakes which proved dangers and hindrances to the later Church, that was largely because at times it was more subservient to Greek philosophy than to the conceptions of the prophets and of Christ.[1] I must not now stop to dwell on these points. All that I want now to suggest is that Christianity showed itself from the first conscious that the materials of its faith, simply because its faith was true, required of it to enter into the field of human philosophy, as well as of human life, and there, too, to test all things and to show that it believed in human reason as the gift of God.

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[1] Thus I feel sure that it was a false subservience to Greek philosophy which caused the Greek theologians to emphasize the im-

Once again, in the thirteenth century, in the dawn of the renaissance of humanity after the really dark ages, the schoolmen, headed by the great Thomas Aquinas, showed the Christian faith to be capable of supplying a synthesis in which all available knowledge could find a place. Never since then has such a complete synthesis, nor anything approaching to it, been accomplished. For any such synthesis to be again accomplished and accepted by a whole civilization, as the scholastic synthesis, taken as a whole, was accepted, would be only possible if mankind or Christendom were again to realize such an ordered unity of life and faith as that common ideas or doctrines could really prevail and become the current coin of life.[1] From any such state of things we are far indeed. But what cannot at present be done for a whole society

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passibility of God in a sense which evacuates in great measure the meaning of the Bible. Also it derived surely from Greek philosophy, and not from the Bible, the idea of the essential *indestructibility* of the human soul or consciousness.

[1] Since the Renaissance there has been in certain regions, and within our own country more than once, such a degree of unity as has rendered possible the wide and common acceptance of constructive intellectual work—expressing some sort of intellectual synthesis. Thus Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Butler's *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, and on a lower plane Archdeacon Paley's *Natural Theology* and *Evidences of Christianity*, became classics, i.e. adequate expressions in a book of the best common mind of a whole community. But it would be impossible to-day to conceive such a book appearing. The "common mind" is lacking, except in groups.

or civilization can be done for individuals and groups. That is the only possible preparation for something wider. Any individual or group of to-day, which accepts the revelation of the prophets as a true disclosure of the ultimate realities of the universe, must ask himself how, on the basis of his faith, he can face the whole sum of scientific and philosophic knowledge of his time, and whether he can see his own way to an adequate synthesis. Perhaps, as was suggested earlier, the greatest reassurance that this is possible is to be found in the fact that great scientific men and capable philosophers, if they are also believers in God, as Christendom has believed in Him, are not in experience found to be hampered in their scientific or philosophical thinking. They bear witness that in their faith they have retained or found their intellectual freedom. But this is not enough. We cannot be content with the witness of others. We need to be able to realize our intellectual freedom in some sort of intellectual synthesis, or at least to see the way opening towards such a synthesis. Thus we must approach the task of relating what we have gained from the prophets and Christ to the whole of our knowledge.[1]

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[1] The Italian philosopher Croce gives an interesting appreciation of the mediaeval historians, to whom he gives the preference over their Graeco-Roman predecessors, in spite of their immense inferiority to them in culture and ability, in this respect—that they first viewed history as progress towards a goal, and that their pessimism was thus irradiated with hope. They saw a divine purpose working through scathing judgements to an assured end: see *Teoria e storia della storiagraphia* (Bari, 1917), p. 188. But, in fact, it is the Hebrew prophets who should have the credit of having been pioneers in this way of regarding history.

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CHAPTER VI

REVELATION AND REASON

Now we come back to the field in which we made our first efforts in the reconstruction of belief, unassisted by any idea of positive revelation—that is, to the world of natural knowledge, of the sciences and of philosophy. In this field we had found ourselves up to a certain point enlightened and reassured. We had found that reason and beauty and goodness cannot be regarded as merely qualities of our minds. They belong to the universe of things. There is an "eternal, not ourselves," which is at once reason and beauty and goodness, with which we can hold communion and co-operate. And this eternal being we can call God and in a sense worship. And a belief of this kind has at different periods and in different countries been the basis of what may be called a natural religion for educated men. But we had also found ourselves speedily dissatisfied and baffled. This God of nature could be so dimly descried. His personality, His character, His purpose, on the whole appeared to be so ambiguous that the question was forced upon us—If there is a God, is it not at least conceivable that He may have (so to speak) taken action on His side, and disclosed Himself in a more satisfying manner in response to the anxious quests and prayers of our groping and thirsty minds and spirits?

After all, there is in the common tradition of Judaism and Christianity, and indeed of Mohammedanism also, a perfectly definite assurance that He has done so, and that the primary channel of this self-disclosure of God was the Hebrew prophets, whose teaching was the foundation on which Jesus Christ certainly built. It has been on the assurance of this word of God that the civilization of Christendom has in great part reposed. It was incumbent upon us, therefore, at least to investigate the great claim. We have done so with the greatest care we could devote to it, and we have found ourselves profoundly impressed. Provisionally, but confidently, we were led to the conclusion that the claim is true and justified, and the prophetic message really a word of God.

Then we proceeded to analyse the intellectual contents of this divine self-disclosure, and we found them, beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt, to be as follows :

(1) That God is a personal being—"super-personal," if we like to say so, but at least personal—as a person making His will known to us, and demanding of us that we should deal with Him as with a person, at once our unerring judge and our loving Father.

(2) That He is, at the root of things, the sole, absolute, or omnipotent [1] being, though certain important qualifications of His absoluteness are also clearly indicated, as by His creation of free spirits who cannot, consistently with their nature, be coerced into obedience, and also by the essential perfection of His nature.

(3) That He is the absolute creator of all that is : perfect in Himself " before the world was."

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[1] The root meaning of omnipotent or almighty is not " able to do anything," but " powerful in and over all things."

(4) That He is perfect moral goodness—that God is love.

(5) That man is purely a creature, but endowed with reason and a real, though limited, freedom, qualifying him for free co-operation with God, but necessarily capable also of perversion; and that it has in fact been perverted on the widest scale, and the moral disorder of the world is due to this sin—that is, the lawlessness of man, and of other free beings dimly discerned in the background.

(6) Finally, that the purpose of God is to redeem the sinful and disordered world; that His kingdom—the realm of obedient wills—already exists and is discoverable here and now; that it is the business of good men to behave as its faithful citizens; and that they have a sure goal in view, for in the end God is to come into His own perfectly in the whole creation. This is the final kingdom or reign of God, and mankind is destined to immortal fellowship with God in this world to come, if he has not by his wilfulness lost his soul and excluded himself from the divine fellowship.

This is a singularly fresh and illuminating conception of God and His purposes. Over long ages it has proved itself capable not only of satisfying the moral needs of the best of mankind, but of inspiring and maintaining his noblest efforts. In the past it has also given him intellectual satisfaction. But our knowledge of the universe has grown enormously under the illumination of the physical sciences; philosophy has been very busy with its speculation and its criticism; historical criticism and anthropology have rewritten our human records; and comparative religion has made it impossible for us to be satisfied with any restricted view of revelation. These new sciences have, as we began by recognizing, upset the previously current presentations of the revealed religion on a very wide scale. And we are bound to claim the fullest liberty for science, and for reason in all its legitimate activities, because reason is at the last resort our only instrument of truth. Thus we cannot play false to our reason, or be content with any crude antithesis between faith and reason, faith, we find, being only reason in the making. If then, on a fresh review, we find the data of revelation, as they stand out so clearly before our minds, bringing us into positive and apparently irreconcilable conflict with what seems to be solidly grounded knowledge, we shall be indeed bewildered and thrown back baffled again. Can we find a synthesis, or a way towards a synthesis, between these data to faith and the conclusions—more or less definitive—of the sciences or of philosophy ? Or where such conclusions are precisely what is lacking, can our faith contribute to the solving of otherwise insoluble questions ?

Probably the greatest difficulty which will emerge for most of us will concern the belief in the absolute goodness of God, if He is also to be believed to be the Creator of all that is. This problem we will face under the head of philosophy. But first of all we will enquire whether, with our recently won faith in the God of revelation, we stand free in the world of the physical sciences.

I

It has already been pointed out that exclusive preoccupation with the methods of the sciences has tended inevitably to a materialistic interpretation of the world. But such an interpretation we have claimed, with the encouragement of most of our contemporary philosophers, to set aside as quite one-sided and untenable. It is our reason which compels us to see spiritual meaning and purpose in the world. It is our reason which forces us to interpret the material in terms of mind and not mind in terms of the material. But the current spiritual interpretation of the world by the philosophers is a sort of pantheism. The question now is whether the distinctively Christian theism—the religion of the prophets and of Christ—raises any fresh difficulty from the point of view of the sciences.

On the whole, the answer is in the negative. Science is increasingly disposed to recognize its abstract character—which means that for its own purposes it makes abstraction from the world as a whole of certain departments or functions or aspects of the world, and studies them apart from the residue which is irrelevant to the purpose in hand.[1] In particular it is not concerned with origins. It neither affirms nor denies anything about the source of being and life. As far as I can see, there are only two points at which conflict threatens between the claims of science and the postulates of revealed religion—(1) as to whether the Biblical account of creation is not in such marked conflict with the scientific account of the origin of the universe as to discredit itself; and (2) as to whether the universe scientifically viewed can make room for free will.[2]

1. Science, then, presents us with the universe, and

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[1] See Haldane's *Relativity*, p. 40, and *passim*.

[2] Perhaps the appearance of conflict between Religion and Science to-day is most serious on the question of the Fall of Man. But we had better postpone that question till we are in a position to consider it in connexion with St. Paul's doctrine of Christ and His functions. See Book ii, chap. ix.

particularly that part of it which we know more or less intimately, as the scene of an age-long evolution of matter and life, out of which, only at its last stage and through infinite struggles, emerges rational and spiritual life in man; which again only through long ages, and that very imperfectly and intermittently, has succeeded in asserting itself and realizing itself in the world. But as regards material nature confessedly the revelation contained in the Bible gives no hint of such an age-long process. It gives a picture only of sudden creations. "God spake, and they were made: he commanded, and they were created." What are we to say of this broad contrast? I think a believer in the reality of Biblical inspiration must admit in the widest sense that this inspiration of certain men by the Spirit of God does not appear to have carried with it any special enlightenment on those subjects on which man has proved able, though with infinite labour, to enlighten himself. In the broadest sense "the Bible was not given to teach us science," and does in fact speak only in terms of the science of its times. Its only concern with nature is to affirm that all that exists is the creation of the one God, and that His will is its law. But in the region of human nature, with which the revelation is particularly concerned, it does present us with a picture of evolution—that is, of a divine purpose only very slowly and gradually, and after vast catastrophes and infinite struggles, and as yet very imperfectly, realized—nay, only beginning to be realized, though thousands of years have intervened between Abraham and us.[1] Plainly, then, though the revelation did not do anything to teach men about an age-long process of physical creation, yet it did give them a conception of God's method in dealing with man which is in agreement with the method which science now discloses to us in nature as a whole. Science, we may say with truth, has only brought our notion of the creation of nature broadly into harmony with the conception of the making and remaking of man which we find in the Bible.[1]

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[1] The Biblical expression "the ages of the ages" or "all the generations of the age of the ages" (Eph. iii. 21) represents profoundly the idea ot slow process towards a conclusion.

To put this in other words—the Bible in its account of God's dealings with man—and this is the only field of its professed inspiration—suggests a God as unlike as possible to the "Great Emperor enthroned somewhere outside the world, ordering it by absolute fiats to be accomplished in a moment."

2. But can science make room in its universe for the Biblical emphasis on human freedom, which means that, wherever human wills occur, there are points of spontaneity and contingency; and which also involves the actual occurrence in the world on the largest scale of much that ought not to have been and need not have been, for this the prophetic religion plainly requires? Or can it claim the right to declare free will at the last analysis an illusion?

Now, it may well be the case that neither our science nor our philosophy nor our theology will ever arrive at an adequate theory of the relation of the elements of determination from beyond and spontaneity from within in human conduct. But for the sake of simplifying theory we must not deny facts. And I contend that freedom of will is a fact and reality. It is a fact of which we have direct consciousness that within the world of physical sequences there are points—viz. human wills—where the direction in which the energy accumulated in the human organism is liberated, as in this or that kind of action, is in part determined by free choice.

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[1] We must remind ourselves that the Miltonic idea that man was created perfect and in full development is not suggested by Scripture and is repudiated by the Fathers. See above, p. 10.

We need not pause to ask how widely this element of freedom exists in the universe. Among our more imaginative philosophers and men of science there are those who treat it as highly improbable that men should be the only free spirits, and postulate a universe full of them. But we need not concern ourselves with what at this stage is purely hypothetical. Nor need we seek to determine how much truth lies in Henri Bergson's view that only in dead matter do we find the dominion of physical necessity, and that wherever life is, from its earliest stages, there also is something indeterminate and free. We must, I think, at any rate confess that the theory of determination gained its strength when the characteristic sciences were mathematics and physics; and that, since biology became dominant, it has never proved adequate to express the movements of life. Also, seeing that life develops so gradually and, as it seems, continuously into conscious mind and freedom, it is hard to resist the impression that mind and freedom belong to it in a measure from the beginning.

But leaving all these questions concerning the range of free will in the universe aside, let us concentrate our attention on the point in nature where moral freedom becomes part of direct human experience. At least in man there is something which the sequence of physical determination cannot account for, something totally different in kind to physical determination.

The action of any mechanically determined object is the resultant of the forces acting upon it in combination, as a billiard-ball touched by two cues moves in a line representing the combination of the two forces. Obviously such mechanical formulas do not avail to interpret vital movements. Yet though the movements perhaps of plants and certainly of animals appear to involve selection and choice, we cannot know what happens as from within. But in the region of the human consciousness the process of that portion of our activities which is deliberate and voluntary discloses its nature quite clearly, and especially clearly in the worthiest and noblest of our race. There we have a scene in which what we call (by the use of a physical metaphor) motives appear as appealing to the sovereign will, and the will by choosing between motives gives preponderance to one, and the others are neutralized, and the resultant action is what it would have been if they had been exercising no pressure. Nay, as we often know, the fact that we were under strong temptation to yield to some lust or appetite, but rejected the suggestion as unworthy, seems to give increased energy to the action which contradicts the unworthy impulses, or, on the other hand, if we yield to temptation, the remembrance of duty deserted causes us to plunge all the more violently into the unworthy course we have chosen. Here, then, in the region of human choice we claim to know that the energy stored in the human organism is liberated in movements the direction of which is determined by the choice of the will—the movements involved in doing right or doing wrong respectively. Of the conviction that this is so we may say what Zeno the Stoic said of sense impressions, that it " takes hold of us by the hair and drags us to assent." If I am not certain of free choice, I am certain of nothing; and I mean by this that if I have done wrong, if I have given my consent to the "lower" motive against the "higher," I have done what need not have been done and ought not to have been done. We may restrict as anxiously as we can the limit of freedom; we may point out that whatever we do we can only surrender ourselves to some impulse from beyond—either, in religious language, to the Spirit of God, whose service is perfect freedom, or to the lusts of the flesh, to obey which is to become the slaves of sin—but that in neither case is there pure initiative in the will. We may make the most of all the influences of heredity and character. Nevertheless at the last analysis you cannot rob the will of the sane man of responsibility for the choice by which it surrenders to one motive or another, and thereby determines action in this direction or that, so as either to promote the divine order or to add to the moral confusion and lawlessness of the world. And God Himself, in the disclosure of Himself which we have been considering, does not bid us think that even He foreknows which way we are going to choose.

This conviction I could not surrender under any pressure from science. For if I know anything, I know it is true. But, in fact, it does not really affect science. Science can only take account of the fact that the energy first stored in the human organism is then liberated in action. That it might have been liberated in some other kind of action it is not its business to affirm and it cannot deny. It cannot pretend, whether in man or in an animal, to answer the question, What is the place of the will in the liberation of the energy? That can be known only from within by direct experience in the soul of man.

Without fear of discord, then, with legitimate science, we must hold to the conviction that God has created beings with the responsibility of freedom—that within the scope of His universal presence and energy He has so far limited Himself as to leave room for their free activity, with all its disordering effects upon His creation, when it is misused; and in each act of our moral choice, however largely determined by conditions over which we have no control, such as circumstances, heredity, and the character generated by our whole past, we must recognize that the determination is not complete—there remains a spontaneous element in each choice which constitutes, according as it is exercised, our moral worth or our sin, our moral liberty or our moral servitude.

This doctrine of freedom and responsibility rests on an assurance than which nothing can be more sure, because there is nothing I know so surely as what I myself am. Objects I can only know as they are presented to me from outside. The definition of them for me must be in terms of such external knowledge. But I know myself from within. It is from inside that I discover the definition of self-hood, though, of course, what I seem to know for certain of myself is confirmed by the consent of other selves. I know that amidst all the forces, physical and social, acting upon me, I am a largely self-determining being, responsible for the making of my own soul. I am therefore constrained to believe that the power which brought me into being, brought me into being that I might freely realize the ideal of human life which presents itself to my conscience. Here, in its freedom and its duty, lies the worth of personality. The more I trust this consciousness the more it proves itself by my moral progress. If I doubt or ignore it, I sink in the scale of being. It is nothing less than intellectual blindness to prefer to this direct consciousness of myself from within, the conclusions which I might draw, if *per impossibile* I could view the world and form my estimate of it, without any such knowledge from within.[1]

II

But how do we find ourselves when, with our recovered confidence in God's real disclosure of Himself through the Hebrew prophets and in Christ, we start again face to face with contemporary philosophy? We have found philosophy on the whole affirming the spiritual interpretation of the universe, and in some sense the existence of God, but very much divided in judgement and doubtful in mind as to (1) whether we are justified in speaking of God as personal; (2) whether we are entitled to think of God as an eternal and perfect consciousness, or only as gaining self-consciousness in man and other rational beings, if such exist; (3) whether He can be thought of as the Absolute Being or as only one element or aspect of a whole that is more than He; (4) whether we can entertain the thought of God as the Creator, prior to, independent of, and the absolute author of all that exists in the universe of things. We found it again (5) giving a very uncertain sound, not only on the question of the reality of human freedom, with which we are not going to deal further at present, but also on the question of the personal immortality of human souls. Finally, though not so much on the ground of philosophy, perhaps, as of common sense, we find ourselves confronted with (6) a deep and widespread protest against the doctrine that the God who made the universe of our experience can be a God of love.

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[1] It appears as if philosophical intellectualism was always at work to *depersonalize* the universe: see Pratt's *Religious Consciousness*, p. 17, quoting Von Hügel: "The intellectual and speculative faculty seems habitually, instinctively to labour at depersonalizing all it touches." Cf. an interesting article by F. C. S. Schiller on William James (*Quarterly Review*, July 1921, pp. 31, 35): "Ever since Plato the treatment of personality has been involved in inextricable difficulties, because the accepted theory of knowledge has found no room for it." . . . "The academic attempts at dehumanizing personality." Cf. also Dr. Relton's *Some Postulates of a Christian Philosophy*, cap. vii, "Meaning and Value of Finite Individuality." See also below, note p. 170.

Now, confessedly, the religion of the prophets claims to assure to us the solution of all these difficulties. It brings down the balancing scales certainly on the side of the personal God, who is the only absolute being and the Creator of all that is, who has made man a free being, destined for personal immortality, and who, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, is perfect goodness, perfect love. What we have to do now is to seek in all sincerity to see how our provisional faith in the revealed religion stands towards the conclusions which our reasoning powers, working on the basis of our experience, suggest to us. And we must be honest with ourselves—that is to say, if we must decline to yield our reason into the keeping of ecclesiastical authority, we must equally decline to be terrorized by the authority of the intellectuals. History is full of the record of their profound mistakes. We have already declined to be satisfied with their apparent refusal *a priori* even to consider the evidences of God's positive self-revelation of Himself in an historical process, of which the Bible gives the record. As a result of this refusal, we have been profoundly impressed with the grounds for believing in the reality of this revelation. Here again we must claim the fullest liberty to reject their *a priori* determination of what kind of God is rationally conceivable; indeed, history seems to warrant in many directions a deep scepticism as to the powers of *a priori* determination which the human reason possesses.

1. It is not, however, in any distrust of abstract reason, but by making the fullest use of it that I am capable of, that I, for my part, declare that I find the conception of an impersonal God—an impersonal mind or righteousness in nature—which is the conception of the higher pantheism, really far less intelligible and far less rational than the conception of a personal God. I cannot hold the conception of mind or of truth or of purpose or of righteousness except on the background of personality. In experience I only know these things as functions or qualities of persons. No doubt the personality of God must be something much greater and more comprehensive than human personality. We may prefer to call God super-personal. No doubt also, if at a later stage of enquiry I find reason to believe that the divine personality is complex and social, as the doctrine of the Trinity represents it, I shall experience a certain intellectual relief and enlightenment. But at least my reason welcomes the assurance that God is what the human person is—conscious of Himself and of His relationship to all things that in any sense exist, capable of determinate will and judgement and action, and self-determined by essential spiritual character; in other words, that the human personality is at least a better image of God than mechanical force or merely vital movement or merely abstract idea. This, I suppose, is the substance of the Psalmist's

argument—"He that made the eye, shall He not see?" If personality is the highest known thing, must not God be at least that highest thing?

2. Again, I must profess that I cannot attach any meaning to the idea, presented to us by so many philosophers, of a God who is eternal reason, order, and purpose in the universe, but who only attains to self-consciousness after long ages in man. I can understand, on the one hand, the idea of a slowly realized purpose in the world, and of a world in which finite persons, endowed with the rational power to correspond freely with this purpose, appear only late in its history, if behind the world and prior to it there is the conscious mind of God. I can understand, on the other hand, what is meant by a universe which, through all its main bulk, shows no signs of mind or purpose, though I find decisive reasons for rejecting this opinion. But this idea of unconscious mind and purpose I find very difficult. If I see in the whole universe a rational order, if I see a purpose of beauty in the world prior in time to man's appearance, and a purpose of fellowship and love becoming dominant in the animal world before man, the conclusion which my reason welcomes coincides with what the prophets proclaim as God's word—that His conscious purpose is behind all, the background of all development and all progress, and the security of their final goal.

3. The revealed religion undoubtedly postulates a God who is the absolute; not, of course, that the universe is identical with God its Creator, but that the God of the prophets, or the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the one and only ultimate source of whatsoever force, power, quality, or kind of being exists in the universe, and that He contains and

sustains in being all that is, and guides it to its goal, and shall finally be "all things in all." This absoluteness of God must, as we have seen, be qualified so as to admit of the existence, by the creative will of God, within the scope of His universal activity, of free spirits who, though they draw all they are from God, yet are granted such spontaneity of choice as involves the power of disordering over long ages, though not in the final issue, the world as God would have had it be—God, so to speak, standing far enough aloof from such free spirits to allow for their dependent but spontaneous action. But the revealed religion strenuously contradicts the idea of any ultimate dualism or pluralism in the universe—the idea of any original "matter"[1] or force or will outside God or other than God. And in this it seems to me to be in harmony with reason. I think that in the fullest sense it is the postulate of both philosophy and science that the ultimate reality is one; and that the only difficulty suggested by either experience or reflection on experience is—what we must be considering directly—the profound difficulty of believing that the one ultimate force and law behind the world and in the world of our experience is absolute goodness and love.

4. There is no doubt a revolt among philosophers against the Biblical doctrine of God the Creator, and a demand that we shall recognize that God and nature are correlative in such sense that we must hold "creation" to be co-eternal with God, inasmuch as God only realizes Himself in nature, and cannot be conceived of as existing prior to and independently of nature.

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[1] See further below, p. 150.

Thus Dr. Pringle Pattison[1] states the conception which must be rejected in these words:

> "According to this conception, God existed in all His perfection and blessedness before the creation of the world. He chose to create a world, but He might equally have foreborne to create, and this abstention would have made no difference to His self-sufficient being. The world, in other words, is in no way *organic* to the divine life. . . . It cannot be deduced from the essential nature of God."

This position is rejected, and the ground of the rejection is stated thus:

> "To perfect knowledge and perfect goodness there can be no choice, in our sense of the word, as dubiety between alternatives and a making up of our minds for one or the other . . . His action is simply the realization of His nature."

Now, we must be profoundly conscious that in this discussion of what might conceivably have been, or, in other words, of the nature of divine choice, we are moving in worlds too high for us. But we have seen reason to believe that a self-disclosure of God has been granted to us "from above," not as a conclusion of human reasoning, but yet through human minds, and in such a manner as has necessitated its expression in intellectual propositions; and these propositions, if they are necessarily inadequate to eternal realities, must be the best image of the truth possible under our present conditions of knowledge. And there is no doubt that this revelation has both by its first recipients, the prophets, and by its exponents, both Jewish and Christian, been held to involve the self-complete and independent existence of God "before the world was."

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[1] In the volume entitled *Spirit*, edited by Canon Streeter, pp. 13–14.

As has been said before, when Christianity makes its historical appearance in the world of the Roman Empire, it is found contending vigorously for its own specific theism against the current philosophic pantheism, and especially contending for the conception of God the absolute Creator, perfect and self-complete and free. On this it clearly felt that its whole moral attitude to God reposed.

The formulas for which the Church contended were (*a*) that God created all that came into being "out of nothing," as against the current Greek idea that God was eternally confronted with a co-eternal "matter" upon which all He could do was to superinduce "form." Now that matter appears to be resolvable into force, and force for a believer in God appears to be simply the putting out of His will, it is perhaps true to say that the danger from the idea of a formless matter co-eternal with God no longer exists. The limitations on the omnipotence of God in creation which we are now called upon to recognize are not those of an external and more or less intractable material, but those which appear to inhere necessarily in the production of a gradually evolving universe, the very idea of which involves imperfection at each stage and mutual limitation by its parts or elements. But (*b*) the Church also contended for a distinction between the being of God on the one hand, which alone is absolutely necessary and could not have been otherwise, and on the other hand everything which belongs to the created universe, which is not eternal nor necessary but contingent upon the divine will. It exists (so the formula ran) "not by nature, but by will." Philosophically it was soon found that such a conception of God as self-sufficient, prior to and apart from all creation, was facilitated by the doctrine of the Trinity, which had been already accepted by the Church on quite other than philosophical grounds. This doctrine enabled the Church to think of God as containing within Himself the full conditions of life and self-realization—the Father eternally expressing Himself in His Word or Son and Spirit, and in that eternal fellowship realizing the full life of will and knowledge and love; and enabled it also to think of creation as the expression on a lower plane of what existed already in eternal counterpart in God.[1] But this doctrine we cannot yet entertain. Its grounds are quite beyond us. All that can be urged at this stage is that no idea of God can be satisfactory to our reason which at the last resort makes God dependent for self-expression upon creation—that is, represents God as immanent in nature and not transcendent. And He cannot be spoken of as transcendent unless He can be conceived of truly as "living His own life" prior to and apart from creation. Otherwise He becomes wholly dependent upon nature, the soul of nature, and can only be said to become conscious, in the sense that nature contains self-conscious spirits in whose consciousness God may be said to be conscious and in whose moral goodness God may be said to be good.[2] Here we are back in pantheism with all its fatal moral and intellectual weaknesses. For if God is only the soul of nature, we seem to have no security as to which tendency in nature—the morally purposeful or the morally indifferent, which seems far the vaster—is going to prevail. God must be all that nature is. If we are to vindicate, what our moral consciousness so imperatively requires, the existence of right and of a supreme moral will over the whole creation, personally willing the right and condemning the wrong, we must be able to believe in a God who prior to creation and apart from creation has will and character—that is, is transcendent—a God who has His life and being in Himself. I am persuaded that the only refuge from pantheism—which of course takes us back behind Christianity, and all that it has won for the world, upon the old Pagan ground—is to maintain that in some real sense—which we at least can only express in temporal language—God is prior to creation, and exists eternally complete in Himself in the full blessedness of self-realizing being "before the world was." I acknowledge that human reason could never, by its unassisted efforts, have arrived at this conception of God the Creator[1]; but granted, what we cannot doubt, that it is involved in the revelation of God, given through the prophets and in Christ, and lies indeed at its very heart, I should contend that reason must welcome it as its only refuge from the pantheism which reason itself, in that department especially which is called moral philosophy, is bound to declare unsatisfying and to seek to transcend.

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[1] This idea found support in John i. 3, according to the ancient punctuation. "Without him [the eternal Word] was not anything made. That which hath been made was life in Him," see R.V. marg. and Westcott's Commentary. "That which was created . . . represents to us what was beyond time in the divine mind."

The idea is expressed in Emily Brontë's lines:

> "Though earth and man were gone,
> And suns and universe ceased to be,
> And Thou wert left alone,
> Every existence would exist in Thee."

[2] See above, pp. 69 ff.

I acknowledge indeed, with all competent theologians, that all human thought and language which ascribe to God priority in time to His creation[1] and distinctive acts of choice between alternatives, is inadequate thought and language, inadequate to the eternal reality. The doctrine of the relativity of knowledge in this sense we must heartily welcome. The absolute truth we cannot know. But I suggest that all this sort of language for which the Church has contended, which is indeed the language of revelation, is the only language which we can use to express the transcendent truth, and the opposite kind of language is fundamentally misleading and false.

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[1] So St. Thomas Aquinas.

5. The idea of the immortality of human souls, which was the outcome among the Jews of the prophetic teaching, and which Jesus Christ so solemnly confirmed,[2] has marked characteristics. First, it was reached wholly under the pressure of their belief in God.[3] There was first the belief in His justice, which as regards individuals was plainly not fulfilled in this world, and must needs have a larger world for its exercise. The school of the Sadducees, it is true, still clung to this world as the only known scene of God's government, and sought to find satisfaction for their sense of justice in the idea of the immortality of a good name handed down and an

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[1] I suppose the best phrase is St. Augustine's—not that creation was in time, but that it involved time. Time and creation are correlative.

[2] Mark xii. 24 and parallel passages.

[3] As is well known, the Jews were sedulously prohibited by their prophets from any attempt to get into direct touch with the spirits of the dead. In our day we need not question the legitimacy of enquiry by trained investigators into "spiritualistic" phenomena. But we need continually to protest that no doctrine of survival which has moral value can be based upon anything else except faith in the justice and goodness of God—of which faith it seems to be an inevitable consequence.

honourable family perpetuated.[1] But the conscience and heart of Israel as a whole demanded a real and personal immortality. Secondly, it was the sense of personal communion with God, into which the soul of man was admitted, which made it at last impossible to doubt that this communion begun here would be perpetuated and fulfilled beyond death. Such was the belief that Jesus Christ confirmed. It was a belief in immortality of so fully personal a kind that it took shape in a doctrine not merely of the immortality of the soul, but of the resurrection of the body. This particular form of the belief as it was perpetuated in Christendom is so bound up with the belief in the resurrection of Christ that we will defer its consideration till a later stage of our enquiry.[2] Now we will only ask whether philosophy has any valid objection to urge against the belief in personal immortality.

No doubt philosophy is shy of it. As has been already noticed, speculative thought tends to depersonalize what it touches. And the belief in personal immortality is bound up with the emphasis on personality as a far more important category than any abstraction such as thought or knowledge. These we believe to be functions or qualities of persons. Fully rational being is only known to us as the being of a person who feels and wills and thinks. Philosophers like Dr. Bradley and Dr. Bosanquet are fond of speaking of personality as "transcended," "dissolved in a higher unity," "merged," "blended," "fused," "absorbed." I fear I must understand Lord Haldane in a similar sense. But I believe this tendency to depreciate the distinctive personal self, as if it were a merely temporary limitation on the large life of reason or spirit, to be wholly a mistaken tendency. I think the emphasis on personality both in God and in man as the highest category, an emphasis which we owe to Christianity, is one of the chief glories of that religion, and one chief clue to its power of being the religion of common men and not merely of an intellectual class. In fact, the deepening of the spiritual life, and spiritual vision in the best of men, tends on the whole conspicuously to make their personality more intense and more markedly individual. He that loseth his soul by utter unselfishness shall " save " it and " keep " it and " win " it. Personal character is a greater and deeper thing than any quality of a person such as the power of abstract thought. Moreover, the communion of souls in its most intimate form of friendship and love, though it proves that personalities can in wonderful ways interpenetrate one another, does not even tend to reduce the distinction of persons. It is, indeed, between those most different that personal intimacy is often most real and permanent. Finally, in their relation to God the souls of men whom we should describe as most absorbed in God are not so absorbed as to lose their proper and distinctive being. Paul and John the son of Zebedee and Augustine and Theresa of Avila do not in this life show any signs of becoming less individual by being united to God, nor do they ever lead us to suppose that when they pass the barrier of death it will be otherwise. They will see God, they believe—not become God.[1] In a sense, the personality of God embraces all the world and all finite personalities, but He has created finite personalities and given them the freedom to realize themselves *in* Him without losing themselves—to work out their own salvation—surely not that the distinctive personality so gradually and painfully won may lose the supreme joy of offering to God its distinctive contribution—its self. I think that our deepest moral and spiritual experience—all the experience which makes the belief that the spirit does not perish with the death of the body a rational belief—leads us to believe also that what survives death must be our personal self, purified and deepened and enlarged, but not merged or lost.

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[1] See Ecclus. xl. 9–11, xliv. 10–15.

[2] The grounds of belief in Christ's resurrection are considered in this volume in connexion with the discussion of miracles. But its full import as a part of the whole meaning of Christ's person and work is reserved for the second volume.

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[1] I know that some mystics have used language which suggests becoming God, but the conscience of Christendom has always been shocked.

6. We remain now face to face with the only one of the difficulties raised by philosophical or speculative enquiry which, to my mind, is really formidable —that is, the question whether, in view of the vast area of seeming moral indifference which the universe in its enormous spaces of time and extent presents, and in view of the seeming cruelty of nature and of the mysterious powers which control human destiny, it is really reasonable to believe in a God who is both the Creator and Sustainer of all that is, whose being in some sort nature's laws must express, and who is at the same time Perfect Goodness—Eternal Love.

This is a tremendous question indeed. I suppose that in regard to it men in all ages have been differently disposed—some inclined towards optimism, some towards pessimism. Seneca says in his day that " the greater part of mankind complains of the malignity of nature " ; and certainly in our day the effect of the war and its consequences has been to strengthen the forces of pessimism among us. There are very many among us who certainly have " the will to believe," but who find the belief that God is love very difficult. The days seem to them far off when it was possible with any plausibility to contrast the "simple doctrine" that God is love with the "elaborate and difficult dogmas" of the Church. For they feel that it is only the dogmas that Jesus Christ is God, and His mind God's mind, and that God, the God of nature, really vindicated Him by raising Him from the dead, that do in fact sustain their tottering faith and hope in God.[1] With these dogmas, however, we are not yet concerned—only with the positive content of the prophetic revelation reaching its culmination in Jesus Christ; and as to the content of this there is no question.

These prophets and this Jesus, "the prophet mighty in word and in deed," proclaim with unhesitating assurance and emphasis the goodness of the one God who made and rules all things. And further, there will be no question that this assurance is conveyed to us—quite without arguments about apparently adverse facts, but at least in full view of all the facts in nature and in the world of man which appear to contradict it. It was not the sort of truth which their experience would have suggested to the prophets when the world was being trampled by remorseless and blood-stained powers, or to the rejected and crucified Christ. If they believed it and affirmed it as they did, it was as an assurance imparted to them by God Himself in spite of experience.

It is not then an "easy" doctrine. But is it really consistent with candid reflection upon experience, or as we say, consistent with the facts?

First, we must open our eyes wide to take in all that is implied in the belief that God has created hosts of free beings and made them his vicegerents in the world, in spite of the fact that their freedom involved the possibility of their rebellion, and that, in fact, such rebellion or sin on the widest scale has disordered the world and distorted its history. That is, we are bound to say, a fact, and a fact the full meaning of which we do not readily realize. It carries the vastest consequences. It is only with great difficulty that we can represent to our imagination what the world would have been as God meant it to be—that is, if sin and rebellion had not been, or had been but a rare and intermittent tendency. Even to-day, if the mass of men would repent or change their minds, and would set themselves to serve God and do His will, in a very few years we should have even in the dark places of the earth a paradise instead of a hell. And it is not only over human life that the influence of human perversity or ignorance extends. A distinguished professor of biology, who is not an apologist for Christian doctrine, Sir E. Ray Lankester, assures us that not only the mass of human diseases is due to sin, but that "every disease to which animals (and probably plants also) are liable, excepting as a transient and very exceptional occurrence, is due to man's interference."[1] Certainly thoughtless piety has constantly misused the phrase "it pleased God to order," or "to do" so and so, with regard to orderings and doings which we have the best reason to know are flat contrary to His will—of which we can only say, with our Lord, "An enemy—some hostile will or other—hath done this."[1] Now, we certainly have no faculties adequate to answer the question whether the gift of freedom might not have been given with less disastrous results. It is a merely foolish question. All we can do is to recognize that correlative with freedom is the possibility of sin, and that the world as God made it and would have had it be would have been, as we can see, a wholly different world from the world as it has in fact been. Also we must note that the deeply impressive voices that have so continuously assured us that God is good, in face of all their torturing experience of the world as it is, have finally assured us also that His love has eternity to work in, and is bound in the long issue of things to do the utmost that love can do for every single conscious human soul. At the last, we can easily conceive, every still conscious human soul may be found saying, There is nothing that I have experienced, however bitter and unjust and humiliating at the time, which has not been for good.[2] We are never entitled to forget the warning of Bishop Butler—that from the point of view of our present experience the world presents to us, at the best, " a scheme imperfectly comprehended."

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[1] Cf. 1 Pet. i. 21.

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[1] *The Kingdom of Man* (Constable, 1907), pp. 33 f.: "It is a remarkable thing—which possibly may be less generally true than our present knowledge seems to suggest—that the adjustment of organisms to their surroundings is so severely complete in Nature apart from Man, that diseases are unknown as constant and normal phenomena under these conditions."

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[1] Cf. Jas. iv. 1: "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members?" There is nothing in Shakespeare's presentation of human nature more impressive than the sense which he gives us in his great tragedies of the almost boundless havoc in human societies which a single will, obsessed with some violent passion or wilfulness, can work.

[2] Finally lost souls—only so by their own persistence in refusing the known good and choosing the evil—I feel bound to believe there may be. To believe that it may be so is, I think, bound up with accepting the reality of moral freedom. But I conceive that the lost also will recognize that the mind of God towards them was only good. And though their awakening must be awful indeed, and the figures under which it is described are so, I do not think an orthodox Christian is precluded from hoping that the issue of hell, which is the state of the lost, will be extinction of personal consciousness or dissolution of personality.

Next, we must steadily contemplate how much of the progress of the world—not only the moral progress of the individual soul, but also the progress of the race, where progress has been—has been due to suffering and to vicarious suffering. We have no faculties capable of answering the question, What place would suffering have held in the world if there had been no sin? But in the world as it is there is almost nothing worth having which can be won or maintained except at the cost of pain. As Pamela's parents said to her: "O, my child! Trials are sore things; and yet without them, we know not ourselves, nor what we are able to do."

I think that the rational result of these considerations, faithfully and thoughtfully entertained, is to remove a great part of the " heavy and the weary weight."

But there remains the oppressive feeling due to the inconceivably vast spaces of nature which seem to have no moral meaning or significance, and to the awful consideration of the pain of animals. But we need to restrain our imagination by attending to our almost boundless ignorance in these directions. For all we know there may be no fact or force in the vast universe which has not some attendant spirit whose destiny is as much conditioned by it as ours is by the world we inhabit. Truly we have not in our possible knowledge any, even the slightest, reason to deny rather than to affirm such a suggestion. We know nothing whatever about it. With regard, again, to the conscious pain of animals, though it remains to my mind that part of the whole "burden of the mystery" which is hardest to bear, we cannot really estimate their joys or pains, or the proportion of one to the other. The great naturalists appear to have been mostly, like Darwin, optimists in their estimate of the happiness of animals. And so far as animals attain to consciousness, have we any real grounds for denying that their painful contribution to the process of nature may have some recompense in some kind of life beyond? We have indeed, here again, nothing approaching to knowledge. But I confess that the glint of pain in an animal's eye remains, if not a valid argument against belief in God's goodness, yet, as often as my mind dwells on it, a source of unrelieved discomfort. Of course, in regard to natural processes as a whole, we are bound to take note that the estimate of nature as a "gladiator's show," which was fashionable in Huxley's day, has been greatly modified, and almost reversed, by the emphasis which recent biology lays on the capacity for sociality, co-operation, and "unselfishness," as chief among the conditions which throughout the animal kingdom make for success. Indeed, Thomson and Geddes, in their recent manual,[1] dare to conclude their brief summary of scientific reflection on the subject with the words: "It is much for our pure natural history to see no longer struggle, but love, 'as creation's final law.'"

On the whole, I seem to myself to stand in this position. What I am conscious of is not a struggle between faith and reason. No; it is reason in me which demands goodness in God. If I am rationally sure of anything, it is that I find impressed upon my inmost conscious being the obligation of goodness –

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[1] *Evolution*, pp. 246–7.

the sense that I exist in order to be good. And I am wholly unable to interpret this purpose of goodness, which I cannot doubt to be real, except in terms of the goodness of God. Thus it is reason in men which makes them cry out for some sign of divine justice and mercy. It is reason in Prometheus which, beyond the cruelty of Zeus, cries out to some fundamental justice at the roots of being. It is reason in Hecuba which, above the vain gods of Olympus and deeper than the powers of Hades, invokes some eternal justice, by whatever name called, which punishes the wrongdoer.[1] It is reason in Antigone which, behind and above the state law, adores a moral law which is divine, and in obedience to which she is prepared to die. Reason, then, welcomes the revelation which proclaims with such assurance the only word which can make sense of the universe. And within the region of human experience the truth of this word of God, verified as it has been in the consciences of thousands of the best of men, for whom it has passed from faith into knowledge or assured conviction, presents on reflection no real difficulty. In the remaining region of the non-human universe I am rationally bound to lay great stress on my inevitable ignorance. I have no faculties enabling me to judge how much suffering is inevitably incident to physical evolution, or whether any system less full of pain could have been created. There remain, however, in this region of the world, certain elements in reality which it is certainly hard to reconcile with divine goodness; but I am sure they cannot reasonably be held to justify rejection of the assurance, which so convinces me of its divine origin, as to the goodness of God, and which, on the ground of human nature, where alone anything like adequate knowledge is possible for me, has justified itself so fundamentally to the best men. If I stand before Christ and listen to His assurance and reject it, I seem to be self-convicted of wilfulness.

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[1] Euripides, *Troades*, l. 884. "O foundation of the earth and on the earth having thy seat, whosoever thou art, hard for knowledge to find, Zeus or Necessity of nature or Mind of men—thee I addressed in prayer: for moving in thy silent path thou guidest mortal destinies according to justice."

III

Comparative Religion.—Among the comparatively new sciences which have disturbed old-standing religious positions, we reckoned the science of comparative religions. As against the crude, old-fashioned view of heathen religions as simply false, this new science has been sympathetically investigating the various forms which the religious faculty or instinct has taken among various races and in various periods; it has sought to observe religion as a whole among men, to study its origins, its processes of development, its moments of special illumination, its deteriorations, its similarities and differences, and all its apparatus of priesthoods, sacraments, *mana*, tabus, rituals, and sacred books—all with an impartial mind as so many manifestations of one common spirit and tendency. Then the question arises: Is this sort of impartial study and appreciation of the various religions of the world compatible with the belief that one race, Israel, was chosen by God to be the organ of His special self-disclosure—a self-disclosure which had its culmination in Jesus Christ, and through Him was destined to become the catholic and universal religion—the one all-embracing faith for mankind?

We may answer, surely, that there is no incompatibility. I cannot understand why this belief should make us in any way desire to minimize or regard with grudging eyes the truth and excellence which appear in other religions. When Christianity came out into the world of Greek culture, though it combated vigorously what it regarded as the errors and corruptions of Hellenism, yet, at least through many of its greatest teachers, it acknowledged its large element of truth and it assimilated its treasures, appreciating it as having been, in some sense like the religion of Israel, a preparation for Christ. It did this because it believed that God left not Himself without witness in any nation, and that the divine Word or Reason and the Divine Spirit were everywhere in the world at work. This is the temper in which we would approach all forms of religion. If we find high thoughts in Babylonian psalms, or in the psalm of the Egyptian heretic king Akhnaton, or in the sacred books of Persia, if we find a wonderful ethical beauty in the wisdom of the Buddha or of Laotze or of Confucius, or again a divine power in the dramatists and philosophers of Greece, we ought not to be in any kind of way scandalized. If marked similarities to the ideas and institutions of Judaism and Christianity present themselves in the sacramental cults and rituals of many nations, we should be delighted to note and appreciate them. All this will be no more bar to our believing that Israel had a special vocation to be "the sacred school of the knowledge of God and of the spiritual life for all mankind," than a sympathetic interest in the art of all the world will hinder a perception of the special vocation of Greece. We have already examined our reasons for believing that Israel had this special vocation.

We contend that no religion can, as a school of spiritual truth, be set alongside of Israel's. That is a matter of evidence. At a later stage of our enquiry we shall seek to estimate the claim of Christianity to be the catholic and final religion, and its ethical standard the perfect standard. That, again, will be a matter for candid consideration. But granted that those claims are true, they should generate in our minds no kind of grudging jealousy towards other religions. If Christianity is destined in the providence of God to supersede them all, this, we conceive, would be not by excluding, but by including and assimilating to the fuller truth, all the elements of value which each religion is found to contain.

It is, of course, quite as possible to over-estimate the merits of a non-Christian religion as to depreciate them unduly—to under-estimate the corruptions which it has nourished as to magnify them.

For instance, it has become the fashion in many quarters even ludicrously to assimilate Buddhism to Christianity. But, as a matter of fact, they embody radically different principles. Thus the root principle of Christianity is that life in all its forms is good as the gift of the good God, and that, the closer our union with God, the more intense and full will our personal life become : as our Lord said, "I am come that they might have life, and have it abundantly" ; "I am the Life" ; while the root principle of Buddhism is "that life is the greatest of evils," and Sakya Muni "devoted all the strength of his soul to free himself from it, and to free others ; and to do this so that, even after death, life shall not be renewed any more, but be completely destroyed at its very roots. So speaks all the wisdom of India."[1] It is certain that a root principle so fundamentally different from the root principle of Christianity must produce essentially different fruits. To take another example, it is easy for a scholar in his study to frame an ideal picture of Indian religions; but the missionaries see it and know it as it practically is: they see its fundamental moral impotences and pollutions. And to ignore the missionary's estimate, and to accept the idealist's as true, is not either scientific or just. In this as in all other matters we want a balanced mind. Nevertheless, if China and Japan and India were to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ, we should hope that they would never cease to reverence their own sages of earlier days or depreciate their debt to them.[2]

IV

Biblical Criticism.—Finally, we have to ask ourselves how our faith in the inspiration of the prophets of Israel, and in the reality of the revelation of God communicated through them to Israel and through Israel to the world, agrees with the results of the newer science of historical criticism as applied to the Old Testament.[3] Of course the answer to this question depends in great measure on whether this newer science is believed to have yielded secure results largely destructive of traditional views about the Old Testament literature. This great matter cannot be argued here. But I feel so certain in giving an affirmative answer, as the judgement of my own reason, that no weight of ecclesiastical authority to the contrary could move me. There is, I think, no reason to believe that the Church is qualified by its legitimate authority to pronounce judgement on any literary problem. That is a matter for free criticism. I think such criticism has made it certain that (for instance) the Law of Moses as it stands in the Pentateuch presents to us successive codes of law of different dates, and none of them due directly as it stands to Moses, though he was the prophetic initiator of the historical movement through which they came into being; and the materials which these successive codes embody are materials for the most part having a long traditional history before they were embodied in codes. Thus to take only one example: it is, I think, impossible to maintain that the developed law of the priesthood—with high priest, priests, and Levites—as the law of the one exclusive tabernacle or temple, dates back to Mosaic times, or applies to the times of the judges or the early monarchy.

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[1] I quote these words from the sympathetic account of the Buddha and Buddhism from Tolstoy's *Confession* (Aylmer Maude's trans., Oxford Univ. Press), pp. 42–4; cf. Lowes Dickinson's moving estimate of Buddhism in *The Magic Flute* (George Allen & Unwin), pp. 100–9.

[2] To-day we have no dearth of books which seek to give a fair estimate of non-Christian religions. I may refer to J. L. Johnston's *Some Alternatives to Jesus Christ* (Longmans).

[3] Of course historical criticism must apply itself equally freely to the New Testament as to the Old. But we have hitherto been concerned only with its results as applied to the Old Testament.

Again, it is certain, in my judgement, that the early chapters of Genesis—the accounts of Creation, Eden, the Fall, the Flood—are not historical records, but inspired folklore; and the subsequent records of the beginnings of Israel are tradition, and not strict history, actual memories of fact modified in tradition. Later, beside the historical records of Samuel and Kings, of Ezra and Nehemiah, you have in the books of Chronicles a partly imaginative history—history written, not as it was, but as it should have been from the point of view of the later priests and scribes. And besides this, we have in the Old Testament all kinds of literature: devotional poetry, as in the Psalms; moral stories, like Esther and Jonah, and the stories of Daniel, written on a rather remote historical basis; dramas, like the book of Job and the Canticles; philosophy of a special kind, as in the Wisdom literature and Ecclesiastes, and (what is peculiar to Judaism) the later Apocalypses—much of this literature being pseudonymous, as the latter part of the book of Daniel, dating from the second century, is written as in the person of Daniel, who lived four centuries before, or Ecclesiastes in the person of Solomon. And in some of the Prophets there is, besides their genuine work, the work of later prophets, such as "the second Isaiah" (chapter xl. and onward), incorporated with it.

When such results are pressed upon believers in the Old Testament, they are apt angrily to ask, "Then what remains of our faith?" and I have tried to convey the answer in chapters iii and iv. We must start from the solid historical ground of the period of the written prophets. We must reassure ourselves, on this solid ground, of the reality of God's self-revelation. Then we shall find ourselves believers of a surety that God did "in many parts and in many manners speak in old times unto the fathers by the prophets"—that the Spirit, who is God, really "spake by the prophets." That is the essential thing. Then we shall recognize how the prophetic spirit gradually purged and reinterpreted the folklore and traditions of Israel to express moral and religious truth instead of empty falsehood, and how there were different grades and kinds of inspiration, as in psalmists and wise men and codifiers of law and compilers of stories for moral edification, all in different degrees inspired by the Divine Spirit. So viewed, the Old Testament not only becomes much more interesting, but also holds its unique spiritual value not in opposition to, but in harmony with, historical criticism. It is in recognition of the legitimacy of such considerations that our Anglican Convocations have remodelled the question and answer which, in the Anglican service for the Ordination of Deacons, is to be put to those entering the ministry and is by them solemnly to be answered. The question used to run simply, " Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament?" This question remains, but the sense in which it is asked is defined by additional words, " as conveying to us in divers manners the Revelation of God which is consummated in Jesus Christ." And the answer, which hitherto has been " I do believe them," becomes " I do so believe them."

. . . . .

Now, I have tried to set out very briefly the result in my own mind of bringing the intellectual contents of the Biblical revelation to the bar of the various sciences and of philosophy, acknowledging the jurisdiction of the courts in one sense and denying it in another—denying their right to exclude *a priori* the possibility or credibility of divine self-disclosure, but acknowledging their right to test its contents by their own sciences, seeing that, at bottom, the acknowledgement of the validity of our reason is the only basis of any kind of certitude. But we have not found that the sciences or philosophy provide any valid bar to the belief in the divine revelation, the reality of which impressed us so deeply. Accepting the revelation whole-heartedly as of God, we find ourselves still free men with free minds in the worlds of philosophy and science, more free, we dare to say, than the unbeliever and the sceptic.

Additional note to p. 144. I cannot understand how Dr. Rashdall (*Theory of Good and Evil*, p. 317) can contend that to accept determinism, as he finally does, which certainly at the last analysis makes the sense of freedom, responsibility and guilt an illusion, makes no serious difference to morality and religion. He admits that this is "the most important question." He admits that "our knowledge of the empirical facts is far too small to enable us to say that . . . the hypothesis [of indeterminism] would be indefensible" if "any demand of the moral or religious consciousness really necessitates, or even strongly recommends" it. But he proceeds to argue that it does not. This, I say, I find amazing. It is to me quite certain that if I had believed myself at the last resort necessarily determined to do whatever I do, the spring of moral effort would have been quenched in me. It is only the conviction of real freedom and real reponsibility which makes resistance to evil imperative and possible.

CHAPTER VII

THE HISTORICAL RELIGION

It is true in a sense of the Old Testament religion that it is an historical religion—in the sense, that is, that it depends upon the belief that God revealed Himself, not merely in the order of the world as a whole, but particularly and more fully in an historical process in a particular race and period, extending from Moses to Christ. But this conviction rests upon no single event or group of events which is open in any degree to reasonable doubt. We have been able to study its grounds without having to discuss whether anything actually happened which critics deny or any document is authentic which critics doubt. But the case is quite different when we advance upon the ground of the New Testament. The faith which is presented to us in the New Testament indisputably centres upon a single person, in a sense in which it would not be true of any other great religion. Thus Buddhism centres upon Sakya Muni, in that it regards him as the discoverer of a method of escape from the will to live with all its desires and illusions—that was "the way" or "the path." The Buddha is a very moving historical character about whom we know a good deal. But nothing depends upon the verdict which criticism may pass upon the recorded incidents of the life of the Buddha. "The way" remains none the less to be followed by disciples all the world over, who accept the principle that life and the desire for life is an evil and the root of all evil. "The way" would remain if the personal leader were proved a myth. Mohammed, again, is believed in as a prophet, but no more. His existence and substantially the character of his teaching no one can doubt. I think myself that no believer in the reality of the inspiration of the prophets will be likely to doubt that he was originally really inspired to restore, as he professed to do, the religion of Abraham, that is the basis of the true religion; and that his rejection of Christianity, so far as he rejected it, is to be attributed in great measure to the exceedingly debased form in which it was presented to him. But there was nothing original or unique in his teaching about God or man; and whatever the estimate we form of this wonderful man, at the beginning of his career or in its subsequent stages, nothing much depends on any particular incident which criticism is concerned to doubt or deny.

But it is quite different when we come to consider the religion of Jesus Christ as it appears in the New Testament, and (let us say) in the Apostles' Creed, which expresses its doctrine about God in a summary form. Everything there centres upon the person of Jesus, and the functions and aspects of His person, and (in the Creed almost exclusively) upon particular incidents of His life—His birth, His death, His resurrection, His ascension into Heaven, His mission of the Spirit with its consequences. These events enter into the substance of the belief. It is a belief that God has taken action for man's redemption in such and such historical events.

Not, of course, that the Christian Church has ever been content with a merely historical witness. Christ

Himself was plainly aware that not the most miraculous external events by themselves would change the heart of man. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Thus the Christian appeal to certain events in history has always been balanced by the appeal to a continuous spiritual experience of need and satisfaction. It has expected the Spirit of God, working in the hearts of men, to generate such an inward disposition and experience as to make the testimony to past events credible and certain to their minds. And it has, in fact, been the witness of the corporate life of the Church, or of the lives of genuine Christians—the saints, which has made, as it was intended to make, the message of their creed intelligible and credible to others. Thus no one can reasonably accuse Christianity of merely appealing to past events. Nevertheless the whole continuous spiritual appeal of Christianity to the hearts and consciences of men rests upon, or is bound up with, a specific witness borne by certain original eye-witnesses to certain events. The inward assurance is made to rest upon facts—as St. Paul said at Athens, "God has given assurance to us (concerning his purpose in Christ) in that he hath raised him from the dead."

It is because the asserted facts are largely supernatural or miraculous, and because so much of spiritual consequence is made to turn upon them—the whole question, in fact, of God's redemptive purpose—that the Christian records have been, especially in recent times, the subjects of sharply critical examination and many very radical and very different reconstructions, through at least two generations of critics. No doubt the existence of Jesus of Nazareth as a teacher, and certain ideas as to the character of His teaching, may be said to be undisputed by any sane critic. Nevertheless, the positive residuum left by the criticism of, let us say, Harnack, or Schweitzer, or Kirsopp Lake, is in each case disputed by other critics; and the residuum which can be even approximately called undisputed seems to most of us very meagre. In any case, it stands in very marked contrast to the robust and confident religion of the New Testament or the Creeds.

Its dependence on historical events, or events declared to have actually happened, is constantly spoken of as the disadvantage of Christianity, because it is thereby rendered constantly liable to attack by that singularly nervous and subtle and solvent influence, modern criticism. And thus many people, from Ritschl to Inge, have been anxious to disembarrass Christianity from the elements which make it obnoxious to this sort of attack. But the question is whether they do not thereby disembarrass it of its essential worth; or even whether anything is gained by calling the residuum Christianity. The strength of Christianity—its power of appeal to men of different ages and classes and educations—lies, as seems to me indisputable, in its being rooted in a person of whom we have adequate, trustworthy knowledge, or, in other words, upon the substantial historical truth of the Gospels—not their infallibility in detail, but their substantial trustworthiness. If this is a position impossible to maintain, or if the destructive criticism which has been so long prevalent in the intellectual world has its way, I do not doubt that "something will remain," but it will be a residuum so intellectually uncertain in outline that it will result in diverse "schools of thought" for studious men—which will not make much appeal to the common man, hard pressed by life, and not inclined to subtle thought—side by side with different sorts of superstitions for the vulgar, or blankly dogmatic creeds for those who at all costs must have a definite religion and are prepared not to think for themselves. No one can contemplate such a return to the conditions which preceded the advent of Christianity into the world without a sense of disaster.

The Christianity, then, of the New Testament or of the Creeds, the Christianity which at its best has proved itself a power of such incomparable force for the redemption of common human life, is a distinctively historical religion—rooted in an historical person presumed to be adequately known, and in particular crucial incidents concerning Him, notably His death upon the Cross and His resurrection the third day from the dead. And, because we are determined to give our reason its full claim of unrestricted freedom, we will not be guilty of the folly of ascribing too much authority, or final authority, to the intellectuals of a particular epoch. The "intellectuals" in history, even when they seemed to wield in their generation an almost incontestable authority, have too often proved mistaken, and their confident positions have too often been abandoned. Thus at least their authority must not restrain us from thinking and judging for ourselves. So we will, with all the openmindedness of which we are capable, examine the claims made on behalf of the Christ of tradition to be the Christ of legitimate history, to see whether they fail, or perchance can stand.

That this enquiry may be freely made we need to have in mind three considerations.

1. The first concerns the nature of God. Many of our philosophers, like Dr. Pringle Pattison, appear

to deprecate any attribution to God of particular action along particular channels, as if that derogated from His universal presence and action in the world. This plainly prejudices their minds against the "particularity" of the Christian religion. But our newly recovered or newly acquired belief in the self-disclosure of God through the Hebrew prophets will not admit of our entertaining this abstract philosophical scruple. Here, we are convinced, is an instance of God's acting along a particular line by way of inspiration, much more continuously and intensely than in the world at large. His universal action is found not to exclude particular intention and particular action. And surely this is the verdict of nature as a whole. God acts more intensely in man's mind and personality than in rocks or beasts. He shows more of Himself in the free moral conscience than in the automatic action of plants. Again, the spirit of beauty—which is God in one aspect—was more intensely present in the Greeks than in the Romans or the rest of the races. It is a fact to which all belief in God must accommodate itself, that God's general presence and action is compatible with His fuller and intenser presence and action here and there. And there is no *a priori* reason why His fuller and intenser self-revelation of Himself through the Hebrew prophets should not have had its culmination in the particular historical person of Jesus.

2. We shall not for a moment be so foolish as to entertain the idea of exempting the sacred documents of Christianity from the severest and freest criticism. Reason essentially demands that historical criticism shall apply itself with equal and full freedom to every document. But obviously historical criticism reaches different results when it applies itself to different

epochs and to different kinds of documents. It reaches different results when it applies itself to the legend of Arthur, the story of Alfred and the history of Henry VIII, or when it applies itself in the Old Testament to Adam, to Abraham, to Elijah, and to Isaiah. We must apply criticism to all records with the varying results which the records warrant. But we must be very careful in each case that what we are applying is really historical criticism, and not what may be more properly called intellectual prejudice. No doubt all historical criticism implies, more or less, intellectual presuppositions—it must come to its examination of documents with certain canons of probability. But these canons of probability must be very carefully examined and themselves criticized. All good historical criticism must be very submissive to the real evidence in each particular case; and while it cannot do without *praejudicia*—that is, general presuppositions, based upon its general philosophy of experience—it must be very careful that these *praejudicia* are not arbitrary "prejudices"—whether ecclesiastical prejudices or rationalistic. And to secure this, it is necessary that the *praejudicia* of any current school of critics should be exposed to the light and carefully scrutinized, so that nothing should intervene between our judgement and the evidence, which prevents the latter from having its due force.

3. Thirdly, we had better seek to estimate, in the light of the general experience of mankind, the relative value for religion of myths or symbols on the one hand—that is, statements or stories which cannot make any serious claims to be literally true—and serious statements of fact on the other. It is necessary to consider this question, because recent "modernists"

in religion, convinced that the miraculous narratives of the New Testament cannot be historically true, have been consoling themselves, and seeking to console others, with the reflection that the creed and scriptures contain confessedly many apparent statements of fact which are only symbolic and not literally true statements, and that no serious harm to religion will occur if we are compelled to go a little further and to recognize that such phrases as " he was born of the Virgin," " he was raised the third day from the dead," " he ascended into heaven," are not literally historical, but have symbolical value, symbolizing the spiritual truths that the birth of Jesus was providential and His nature pure, that the apostles were convinced by spiritual visions that death had not triumphed over Him, and that His moral Lordship is a spiritual reality.

Now, we cannot doubt that "symbols" or "myths" (as Plato conceived them) have played a great and beneficent part in religion and must continue to do so. Thus (i) the Fathers of the Christian Church, following St. Paul, have always been forward to assert that all our statements about the being of God as He is in Himself—the transcendental reality—are symbolical, in the sense that they are the expression in human language of a reality which we cannot really grasp with our present faculties or expound in human terms. " Man has no celestial language," and can only express eternal things in the best phrases that experience has provided him with, confessing their inadequacy. What they have contended is that such phrases as " Three persons in one substance " are the best phrases which human language can supply; that they have divine authorization behind them; and that to decline to use such phrases because they are inadequate would be to open the door to positively misleading denials or misconceptions.

(ii) There is a whole group of subjects which lie at present outside possible human experience—the beginnings of the world, the end of the world, heaven and hell and the state of the dead—with regard to which there would be to-day very general agreement to recognize that we know nothing except in symbols or myths, such as the stories of creation in Genesis—which there is every reason to believe inspired of God, but are none the less not historical—or the visions of the end of the world and the day of judgement and heaven and hell. It is commonly said that in early Christian days these stories or pictures were believed to be literally true, and that it is a great change to accept them as symbolic. Now, it is certainly the case that in the middle ages and under the Protestant Reformation an undue literalism prevailed; but in the first four Christian centuries the principle of symbolic representation of all that lies outside present human experience was at least widely accepted, and applied to the story of creation and the visions of the end. About heaven and hell it is commonly said that till recent days everyone believed that heaven was a place above our heads and hell a pit beneath our feet. If, however, we consider how Platonism had influenced the educated world, with its doctrine of myths or symbolic stories about creation and heaven and hell, and how deep its influence was on the Christian Church, or at least on its educated members and especially the Greeks, we shall be inclined to doubt this. Certainly Church teachers frankly recognized that " he sitteth on the right hand of God " was a symbolic statement and not a literal truth. Certainly St. Paul, in his language about "the heavenly places," and how we men on earth are already in Christ in them, or in his language about the dead who sleep "in Jesus," does not suggest a vault above the sky or a deep pit underground. I fancy Paul and Origen and Gregory of Nyssa and multitudes of others knew that statements about the other world were symbolic—necessarily symbolic, but none the less vehicles for spiritual truth of the utmost importance.

Anyway, we admit to-day that there is in Christian scriptures and creeds a great deal of language, about things which lie outside our possible experience, which is necessarily symbolic, though the symbolism may be divinely inspired and should, where it is merely of human origin, be the language best adapted of any which we can use to represent the truth.

But the justification for all this symbolism is that the things symbolized lie outside possible human experience in the present world. And the distinctive boast of Christianity has been that by a personal incarnation God has in a quite new way passed inside the region of human experience; that He has taken fresh action in the world of men and nature; that the Word, who is God, has been made flesh, and lived and taught and manifested Himself to men, and was by men rejected, and suffered and died; and that God has vindicated Him by a resurrection from the dead the third day after His death; so that his faint-hearted disciples came to know for certain, on the evidence of their own eyes, that the power which made and rules the world—the Almighty God—is on the side of Jesus, and that He is sovereign Lord. Now, all this may be true or not. But it seems to me ridiculous to doubt that it is in the appeal to facts that the specific strength of Christianity has lain. There is a strength in the symbolism which merely expresses human ideas and aspirations, and it may be an instrument used by the Divine Spirit, but it is of a quite different value to the strength of experienced fact. And because a statement about what cannot possibly lie within present human experience can be recognized as symbolic without losing what strength it can have, it is illogical and absurd to say that a statement which professes to be a statement of what has actually happened does not lose all its special force, if you are bound to recognize that it did not happen as asserted. It appears to me that in ignoring, as some of our "critics" do, the distinction between the value of idea and symbol in religion and the value of fact, they are violating common sense. If Christ was not born of a virgin, but only providentially born in the ordinary way, the narratives of Matthew and Luke cannot with any fairness be described as the best expression in human language of something which human language cannot properly express; for the manner of the birth of Jesus could have been just as truly expressed in accordance with the fact as the birth of John the Baptist, which is side by side with it in St. Luke. As it stands, the story represents on this showing a needless falsification of the facts. So it is with the Resurrection. If the dead body of Jesus did really see corruption like the bodies of other men, the narrative which lays so much stress on this not having occurred, and makes so urgent a claim to be a narrative of things as they happened, is (intentionally or otherwise) very seriously misleading; because what actually happened could have been quite truly described in human language. A virgin birth and a corporal resurrection recorded as facts cannot be harmless and necessary symbols of actual occurrences which were in reality quite different, and which might quite as well have been described as they were.[1]

We must approach, then, this question: Did the historical self-disclosure of God through the Hebrew prophets really culminate in the way which the New Testament represents—that is, in a person who passed the measure of mere humanity, and in a series of events connected with Him, some of which at least are conspicuously supernatural and miraculous? All questions, however, concerning the person of Christ are deferred to another volume. But the circle of ideas about Christ's person and functions in the New Testament is so closely bound up with the specific Old Testament doctrine of God, with which this volume is concerned, that we will devote ourselves at once to two questions, which must receive solution before questions about Christ's person can be profitably asked or answered. (1) Can we rely upon the New Testament documents as historical, when we treat them critically? (2) Can we regard the miraculous incidents recorded as credible, supposing the evidence appears to us to be cogent? Or in other words, is it fair to say that, if we believe the prophetic teaching about God, which Jesus Christ so certainly confirmed, to be really true, we shall find that no *a priori* reason remains in our minds constraining us to disbelieve the witness of the New Testament to miraculous occurrences; and conversely that what makes that witness incredible to so many intellectuals of our day is that in fact they do not believe in the God of the prophets and Christ, but have reverted to a conception of the purely immanent God, which does not essentially differ from the conception of God current in the Greek world which Christianity superseded ?

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[1] Mr. Clement Webb has dealt admirably, as it seems to me, with the relation of myth to history, both for Plato and for us (see *God and Personality*, pp. 168, 175, 177, 179), and has spoken true words on the value of a distinctively historical religion (*Studies in the History of Natural Theology*, p. 30).

Let us seek, then, first of all, to obtain an estimate of the historical value of the New Testament documents in general and especially of those most important for our purpose.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HISTORICAL WORTH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

I

Christianity presents itself, then, to mankind as, in a special sense, an historical religion, that is as a Gospel and a life centred in and based upon a certain group of historical events—the life, death, resurrection, ascension of Jesus of Nazareth and the mission of His Spirit to perpetuate His activity in His Church. History has proved the manifest advantages of a religion which thus makes its appeal to facts of actual occurrence, and we have recognized also its equally manifest peril, supposing it should appear that historical criticism of a legitimate kind can invalidate the supposed facts. It is necessary, therefore, at this stage to look to our New Testament documents and to ascertain whether we can trust both the direct record of the Gospels and Acts as properly historical, and the rest of the documents as being in the main what they profess to be, and as supplying therefore abundant evidence of what the first generation of Christians believed and practised, and of their general outlook over the world.

Now, in respect of the documents of the New Testaments, the advanced critics of the Tübingen school, dominant half a century ago, and their followers, were accustomed to assign most of them to comparatively late dates and to unknown authors. This was the view which called itself critical a generation ago.

But of recent years there has been, on these questions of date and authorship, a marked reaction, of which Adolph Harnack—the greatest, I suppose, of contemporary scholars in the Christian literature of the first century—is representative. When he published in 1897 his *Chronology of Ancient Christian Literature*, the following passage produced a sensation:

> "There was a time," he wrote, "and the general public is still at that date, when it was considered necessary to hold the most ancient Christian literature, including the New Testament, as a tissue of deception and falsehood. That time has now passed. For science it was an episode during which she learned much, and after which she has much to forget. The results of my investigations go in a reactionary sense far beyond what one might call the moderate position in the criticism of to-day. The most ancient literature of the Church is, on all chief points, and in the majority of details, veracious and worthy of belief from the point of view of literary history. In the whole New Testament there is probably only one work which can, in the strictest sense of the word, be called pseudonymous, it is II Peter. . . . I do not hesitate to use the word retrogression, for things should be called by their right names. In our criticism of the most ancient sources of Christianity, we are, without any doubt, in course of returning to tradition. The problems arising from the criticism of the sources . . . as well as the difficulties in the way of constructing true history will probably present themselves, in a few years, under an aspect essentially different from that they bear to-day, to the majority of competent critics."

This declaration is accompanied with a good deal of vituperation of critics as men "fixing their attention on all kinds of details in order to argue against clear and decisive conclusions." [1] This language, I say, created a sensation as coming from one who had shared the more destructive opinions, and who still in his beliefs about Christ remained as far removed from orthodoxy as ever. We in England who had watched the struggle between the destructive German school of critics and our own conservative scholars, amongst whom Dr. Lightfoot was the greatest, saw in such language the recognition of the fact that, on the main questions of date and authorship, the conservatives had gained a solid victory—not a victory over criticism, but a victory of sane criticism against those who were really misusing it for ulterior purposes.

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[1] Harnack, *Chronologie* (Leipzig, 1897), vol. i, pp. viii–x. This was followed by Harnack's works on St. Luke and the Acts, entirely reversing his previous opinions. Sir William Ramsay, the dis-

1. Let us then see how matters stand about our Gospels. The canonization of four Gospels—that is, their selection by the Church as *the* four authoritative records of the Master's life—goes back to the middle of the second century.[1] Let us now proceed to examine their credentials, or at least the credentials of two of them—St. Mark and St. Luke.

As to St. Mark we have the famous statement contained in one of the fragments from the lost work of Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia—"Expositions of the Oracles of the Lord"—written not later than about A.D. 130. This Papias, we ought to say, gloried in not depending upon written documents, but upon competent witnesses, and relates how he had taken his opportunities of intercourse with those who had been companions of the first disciples of Jesus, or "the elders," as he

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tinguished traveller and historian of New Testament times, is another example of a man who began with the Tübingen view, and was converted by the evidence of facts and documents. On Ed. Meyer's more recent testimony see my *Can We then Believe*, pp. 80 ff.

[1] See Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission* (Clarke), p. 257.

calls them. "If ever anyone came who had been a follower of the elders, I would enquire as to the discourses of the elders, what was said by Andrew, or what by Peter, or what by Philip, or what by Thomas or James, or what by John or Matthew or any other of the disciples of the Lord; and the things which Aristion and the elder John say.[1] For I did not think that I could get so much profit from the contents of books as from the utterances of a living and abiding voice." This, then, is his statement about Mark and his Gospel.

> "This also the elder said: Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered of the things that were either said or done by Christ; but, however, not in order. For he neither heard the Lord, nor had been a follower of His; but afterwards, as I said, he was a follower of Peter, who framed his teaching according to the needs [of his hearers], but not with the design of giving a connected account of the Lord's words. Thus Mark committed no error in thus writing down some things as he remembered them. For he took heed to one thing: not to omit any of the things he had heard, or to set down anything falsely therein."[2]

This account of the origin of St. Mark's Gospel we can accept as historical, unless it were so rigorously interpreted as to mean that there is nothing in St. Mark's Gospel which is not derived from Peter's teaching. Anyone who reads the Gospel, and notes how much of it consists of scenes in which St. Peter figures, will feel its probability.[3] Taking it, as is now generally done, for true, we have to consider who this John

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[1] Aristion and John are regarded as still living at the time of his enquiries.

[2] Salmon's trans. (in the main), *Dict. of Chr. Biog.*, iv, p. 186.

[3] See Batiffol's *Credibility of the Gospels* (Longmans), p. 126.

Mark who wrote the Gospel was. We find him in the Acts,[1] about fifteen years after Pentecost, in his mother's house at Jerusalem, and this house we find a place of resort for the first Christians. It must have been a fairly large house, to hold the "many" who were gathered together and praying. It had an outer gate and a portress, like the gate and portress at the high priest's house (John xviii. 16). There Mark must have enjoyed the fullest opportunities of seeing and hearing the apostles and first disciples, both men and women. He drank constantly at the fountain head of that oral tradition which lies behind all the written Gospels, that witness of the apostolic company to what they had seen and heard "all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that He was received up from us."[2] He was among the men and women whose special privilege it was to treasure this witness. In his Gospel[3] there is introduced the incident of the young man in a linen cloth who was a spectator of our Lord's arrest. It is so singular, and so irrelevant to what goes before and after, that I do not think it can have any meaning but one. It is like an irrelevant figure in a sacred picture of the Renaissance which has in its mouth the label with the words *Iste perfecit opus*. The young man must have been the author of the Gospel. So we should suppose that his familiarity with the apostolic company was of long standing. Thus when Barnabas and Paul returned to Antioch from their visit to Jerusalem, which had been undertaken to carry assistance to the Church of Judaea under the threat of famine, John Mark, Barnabas's cousin, was a natural person for them to take back with them to help in their work. He was closely associated with them in the early stages of the first missionary journey.[1] But he left them before they went inland from Perga to the Pisidian Antioch—it is conjectured because his training at Jerusalem left him still unwilling to commit himself to St. Paul's " liberal " platform in respect of the welcome to be given to the Gentiles. A few years later he is still at Antioch, when Paul and Barnabas had their sharp contention as to whether he was a fit person to be a second time their companion. As it was, Paul and Barnabas separated in consequence of the dispute, and Mark went with his cousin Barnabas alone. There follows a gap in our knowledge about Mark of some ten or twelve years. Then we find him with St. Paul in his prison at Rome,[2] a trusted friend, but apparently just about to start for Asia. Then later again in St. Paul's second captivity,[3] we find him writing to Timothy in Ephesus and begging him to take Mark and bring him with him (to Rome), for " he is profitable to me for ministry."[4] This was no doubt Mark's function—not originality, but ministry to those greater than himself. A year or so later, after St. Paul's death, Peter writes from Rome, in his first epistle,[5] of Sylvanus, " a faithful brother," who is to carry his letter, and of "Mark my son," who is with him. This reminds us of the statement of Papias's elder—that he was "Peter's interpreter." The relationship indicated suggests a prolonged connexion between the two men; and presumably we may fill up the ten or twelve years' blank space in Mark's life with the picture of him as Peter's companion, wherever he may have been, hearing his often-repeated teaching about the earlier experiences of the twelve with their Lord, and either noting it down at the time or preparing to write by storing it in his memory.

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[1] xii. 12, 25.

[2] Acts i. 21–2.

[3] xiv. 51–2. Whether his mother's house contained the *cenaculum* is matter of pure conjecture. That St. Mark was the "young man" is something near to certainty: see Salmon's *Human Element in Gospels* (Murray), pp. 499–500.

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[1] Acts xiii. 5.

[2] Col. iv. 10.

[3] That St. Paul was liberated from his first captivity in Rome, which is described in the Acts, is rendered fairly certain by the fact that Clement, writing towards the end of the first century, asserts (cap. v) that St. Paul went to " the limit of the West " before he was put to death. No one writing in Rome could mean by this phrase anything but Spain: see Lightfoot's note. Granted this, it seems to me that it is unreasonable to doubt the historical *data* of 2 Timothy.

[4] 2 Tim. iv. 11.

[5] 1 Pet. v. 13.

Well, now, after all these experiences, who—outside the twelve apostles—could be better qualified than Mark to write an account of the ministry of Jesus? He had lived so long in the atmosphere of the apostolic witness. And when, without overburdening ourselves with commentaries, we set ourselves to the study of his Gospel—how does it strike us? I speak for myself: it produces upon me an irresistible impression that I am in the presence of reality. I do not know how often, after reading some "critical" work having for its aim to prove that even Mark's account is two or three removes off the original facts, I have gone back to read the little book itself without note or comment, and received afresh this irresistible impression. I am sure that I am here, again and again, listening to one who records what he himself saw and heard—the look of the face of Jesus, the tones of His voice, His gestures, the movement and feelings of the crowd. No doubt you have that feeling sometimes when you read the best novelists. But this sort of realistic power did not exist in the literary circles out of which the Gospels came. And this particular Gospel is singularly destitute of literary skill or grace. Besides, the modern novelists describe for us ordinary human nature. It may be safely conjectured that even they would not have succeeded in producing out of their imagination a life-like image of so supernaturally conceived a person as Jesus. The Gospel, we feel assured, is not the work of either the crude popular imagination which fashions a legend, such as we get in the apocryphal Gospels, or the individual imagination which produces an historical romance or adorns a tradition. Here is the real Man in his real surroundings, as one saw and heard and bare witness.[1] And this one, on internal indications, we believe to be, as tradition tells us he was, Simon Peter.

I do not mean that it is all Peter. Suppose that beside Peter's story of the feeding of the five thousand, Mark heard another story of a miraculous feeding, in which the numbers were four thousand instead of five thousand, and seven loaves instead of five, and mistook it for a different incident, and so gave us an account of two events where really there was but one, this would make no material difference to us. We are asking not for infallibility, but for quite trustworthy history.

It cannot be pleaded that Mark, even if he often heard Peter tell the same incident, could not have remembered his words so minutely. On the contrary, that was the special faculty of the Jewish disciple.

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[1] See Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, pp. 95–105. He quotes from A. B. Bruce on this Gospel: "These marks [in the Gospel] are such as to suggest an eye and ear witness as the source of many narratives, and a narrator unembarrassed by reverence. This feeling, we know, does come into play in biographical delineations of men whose characters have become invested with sacredness, and its influence grows with time. The high esteem in which they are held more or less controls biographers, and begets a tendency to leave out humble facts, etc."

Mark had been trained in Jerusalem presumably, in the Jewish schools, where exact verbal memory was the very faculty especially cultivated. He would have been trained to be an adept in this very thing. "The good disciple," said the Jews, "is like a cistern built of concrete, which does not lose one drop."[1] Our modern education is on quite different lines. Also the Synoptic records are even for us singularly easy to remember, not only our Lord's words, but the records as a whole. What we should suppose is that Peter gave regular instructions, in whatever church he was temporarily abiding, and selected a group of incidents and sayings such as he considered best adapted to his hearers, and that these were frequently repeated, so that St. Mark could well reproduce them quite accurately. This is exactly what Papias's "elder" suggests to us.

It is often asked how it can be that there is no indication, or so little indication, in Mark of a Jerusalem ministry such as the Fourth Gospel records, if this were really historical. But I think this question is based upon a mistake. What gives the scope to Mark's narrative is mainly the selection of incidents for the first instruction of converts made by Peter. There was no intention of making a complete record.

We take note that, though St. Mark must have been very familiar with Paul's mind and Peter's mind as we find it reflected in their epistles, the narrative of his Gospel is extraordinarily free from any influence of a doctrinal kind derived from such experience. All the atmosphere of the record is the atmosphere of the first discipleship with its ignorance and slowness of spiritual perception; and the phraseology and manner of teaching is that of Jesus and no one else—even when, as in the case of the title "Son of Man" or the method of teaching by parables, the phraseology and manner had been quite abandoned in the churches of apostolic foundation.

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[1] See Batiffol, pp. 162 f.

On the exact date of Mark's Gospel, and on the question of there having been more than one edition, we need not dwell. The elder's information suggests certainly that Mark wrote when he was no longer a hearer of Peter, that is, when Peter was dead, and so Irenaeus tells us. We may suppose the Gospel to have been written, as it now stands, just after Peter's death, say in A.D. 65–7. The suggestions which were abundantly made in Tübingen days of a second-century date have now been abandoned.

My contention is, then, that in John Mark you have a man admirably qualified to give us an exact account of the story of the apostles about their experiences with our Lord, and especially of St. Peter's story, and that we have every reason to believe that he has reproduced it with the most faithful and simple diligence. St. Mark's Gospel, then, has every claim to count for good history.

2. Now let us pass from St. Mark to St. Luke and the two books ascribed to him—the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. There does not appear to have been any question raised in early days as to the authorship of either of these books. In the preface to what is (I am not alone in thinking) one of the best and most interesting commentaries on any book of the Bible, Mr. Rackham's Commentary on the Acts,[1] will be found a summary of the reasons for believing the tradition to be true as regards the Acts and incidentally as regards the Gospel. The following

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[1] In the *Westminster Commentaries* (Methuen).

points may be regarded as certain, in my opinion. (1) That the Acts is the work of one author, that is, that St. Paul's travelling companion, who often implies his presence at the scenes he records by the use of the pronoun "we," was the author of the whole book.[1] (2) That the Gospel and the Acts are by the same author. (3) That no one of St. Paul's travelling companions can be put in plausible rivalry with St. Luke "the beloved physician," to whom tradition ascribes the books. (4) That the language of the books themselves supplies the evidence that the author was a well-educated man and most probably a physician, owing to his use of careful medical language.[2] Granted the authorship, a very interesting question arises as to the date. The Acts takes us up to the end of the second year of St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome. Then it closes, as we feel abruptly, with an adverb. Is it conceivable that if, as has been commonly supposed, the Acts was written some fifteen years or more later, the author could have given no indication of the result of St. Paul's trial or of the manner of his death; or that he could have given so favourable an impression of the policy of the Empire towards the Church, without the least hint that it was so soon to pass into a policy of deliberate persecution, under which Peter and Paul would be martyred with many others? Is it likely that no hint would have been given that Paul was mistaken when he assured the sorrowing Ephesians that he would "see their face no more"?[1] Are not all the probabilities of the case met by the theory that the Acts was written up to date, i.e. about A.D. 63, while St. Paul was still awaiting his trial, and that if the author had intended to continue his narrative, his intention was frustrated, perhaps by his own death? This has been very ably argued by Rackham—not for the first time. When he wrote (1901) he had to reckon among his opponents the famous Professor Harnack. But since then Harnack has changed his mind and, reproducing and reinforcing the arguments of Hawkins, Hobart, and Rackham as to authorship, has finally claimed it as almost certain[2] that St. Luke wrote the Acts up to date, and that the Gospel, the first of St. Luke's two volumes, must therefore have been written earlier, and as the Gospel is based upon Mark's Gospel, that again must have been accessible in A.D. 60 at the latest.[3]

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[1] This was proved by Sir John Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae*, pp. 148 ff. Harnack has not recently added much to the cogency of the proofs: see Headlam's *Miracles*, p. 166 n.

[2] This was the argument of Hobart, *Medical Language of St. Luke*. He overpressed his argument. But I think that, after all deductions, enough solid ground remains for his argument to stand upon firmly.

On the whole, I think those who argue for this position have the best of the argument. But I do not want to lay stress on anything that is disputable. Sir William Ramsay—who is unrivalled as an independent investigator of the history and conditions of the early Christian Church, by means not only of the study of all available documents, but by constant travelling, especially in Asia Minor, where he has had great success as a discover of inscriptions—prefers a later date for the Acts; but he has been the most eager and strenuous advocate both for St. Luke's authorship of Gospel and Acts and for his character as an entirely trustworthy historian.

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[1] Acts xx. 25 and 33. In fact St. Paul returned to Asia and to Miletus, where this scene took place, if not actually to Ephesus (2 Tim. iv. 20).

[2] *Date of the Acts and Synoptic Gospels* (Williams & Norgate).

[3] But St. Luke had intercourse with St. Mark at Rome, and may very well have seen his material before it was published.

Indeed, the vindication, by inscriptions and otherwise, of St. Luke's trustworthiness on all that touches the Roman Empire has been startling.

> "The ground covered by St. Luke," writes Mr. Rackham, "reached from Jerusalem to Rome, taking in Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy. In that field were comprised all manner of populations, civilizations, administrations—Jewish and Oriental life, Western civilization, great capitals like Antioch and Ephesus, Roman colonies, independent towns, Greek cities, 'barbarous' country districts. The history covers a period of thirty years, which witnessed in many parts great political changes. Provinces like Cyprus and Antioch were being exchanged between the Emperor and the Senate; parts of Asia Minor, e.g. Pisidia and Lycaonia, were undergoing a process of annexation and latinization; Judaea itself was now a Roman province under a procurator, now an independent state under an Herodian king. Yet in all this intricacy of political arrangement St. Luke is never found tripping. . . . St. Luke is equally at home with the Sanhedrin and its parties, the priests and temple guard, and the Herodian princes at Jerusalem, with the proconsul of Cyprus and Achaia, the *rulers of the Synagogue* and *first men* of Antioch in Pisidia, the *priest of Zeus* at Lystra, the *praetors*, *lictors*, and *jailer* of Philippi, the *politarchs* of Thessalonica, the *Areopagus* of Athens, the *Asiarchs* with the *people*, *assembly*, and *secretary* of Ephesus, the *centurions*, *tribune*, and *procurator* of Judaea, the *first man* of Malta, and the *captain of the camp* at Rome. Such accuracy would have been almost impossible for a writer compiling the history fifty years later. In some cases where his statements had been impugned, St. Luke has been signally vindicated by the discovery of inscriptions, as in the case of the politarch of Thessalonica and the proconsul of Cyprus."[1]

The chief stumbling-block in the way of a high estimate of St. Luke's accuracy as regards the secular details of his story used to be his statement about the first enrolment under Quirinius.[2] But Ramsay has made the reality of such an enrolment remarkably probable; and inscriptions tend to connect it with Quirinius. At the worst, if Tertullian is right in putting it under Saturninus and not under Quirinius, the mistake is only a slight misdating, and Ramsay does not admit even this. The method of enrolment by "every man going up to his own city," which St. Luke affirms, was derided as absurd forty years ago, but has been amazingly supported by the discovery of an Egyptian papyrus on which is a census order of a Roman governor (of A.D. 104) which precisely orders everyone to go for enrolment to his own city. And this is now recognized as a method of the imperial administration in the provinces.[1]

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[1] Rackham, *Acts*, p. xlv.

[2] Luke ii. 1.

Granted, then, St. Luke's authorship, and bearing in mind the vindication of his accuracy as an historian in general, let us read his Preface to the Gospel. It is in St. Luke's own Greek, the Greek of a cultivated man, quite unlike the Hebraic style of the first part of his narrative, where he is obviously relying on some already-existing Aramaic narrative. Well, this preface gives us a singularly convincing account of St. Luke's intentions and qualifications. He notes that the Roman gentleman, for whose benefit he writes, had received instruction,[2] presumably such as was imparted to all Christians orally, in the matters of his story; he notes that there had been already many attempts to put the narrative of the first apostolic witnesses into writing, but he is not apparently satisfied with these attempts. He has had the opportunity of tracing the events of our Lord's history accurately from the beginning, and he is determined to give an orderly and trustworthy account of them, for Theophilus's benefit, and doubtless for the general benefit also, as writers do to-day when they write an "open letter" addressed to an individual, but intended for the general public. There is no claim made by Luke to special inspiration, but only a claim to have had the fullest opportunity of gathering information and to have taken advantage of it so as to be able to produce an accurate narrative. Not that he is careful about verbal or minute accuracy, as is shown by the apparent difference between the summary narrative of our Lord's last appearance and disappearance at the end of his Gospel and the more exact account given in the beginning of the Acts, or by the three accounts which he gives, differing in detail, of St. Paul's conversion: plainly it satisfies him to give a truthful account without troubling about minute accuracy.

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[1] The whole matter can be seen summarized in Box's *Virgin Birth of Jesus* (Pitman), pp. 51–66, and in Ramsay, *Was Christ born in Bethlehem?* (1898) and *Bearings of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the N.T.* (1915), ch. xix–xxi. Ramsay, I admit, often gives the impression of pressing his points a little further than they will legitimately carry. In Pelham's *Outlines of Roman History*, p. 385, "Luke ii. 1" is cited as historical evidence.

[2] See "Those things whereon thou *wast instructed*." The instruction was presumably *oral*. But the word used does not imply this.

And we can discern in great measure his sources of information. He was St. Paul's constant companion from the time of his second or (perhaps) his first missionary journey. In his captivity at Rome, St. Paul bore witness that "Luke the beloved physician" was with him, and under these circumstances he must have had intercourse with St. Mark, from whom he took the main substance of his Petrine narrative to incorporate in his own book.[1] Besides this, there is a large part of St. Luke's narrative, consisting especially, but not exclusively, of our Lord's sayings, which is common to him with St. Matthew. Here, also, it is commonly supposed they were drawing upon a document or documents consisting in the main of our Lord's discourses, which is commonly known among critics as Q.[1] That there was such a document or documents I do not think we can doubt, and criticism ascribes to it a very early date; but the scope of the document remains quite uncertain. Besides St. Mark and Q, St. Luke gives us probable indications of other sources of information. He mentions two individuals connected with Herod's court—" Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward " and " Menaen the foster-brother of Herod the Tetrarch "—and these persons probably account for the special information which he obviously had about matters connected with the Herods. Besides, he mentions repeatedly a group of women who accompanied our Lord and ministered of their substance to Him and His disciples, who were present in Jerusalem at the Passion, and who were in the apostolic company after the Ascension, Mary the mother of Jesus being amongst them.[2] From this group we should suppose Luke to have derived the narrative with which his Gospel opens, after his preface—a narrative which shows evident marks of coming from the mouth or hand of a woman. The special mention of Rhoda in the household of Mark's mother probably indicates whence he got his account of Peter's release; Philip

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[1] It is very likely that when Papias or his informant described St. Mark as not having written what he wrote about our Lord "in order" (see above, p. 187), he meant that St. Mark's Gospel was un-

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systematic and incomplete, and was contrasting it with the more systematic and complete narrative of St. Luke. But we have los+ the context.

[1] The first letter of the German word *Quelle*, " the source."

[2] See viii. 2–3, xxiii. 49, 55, xxiv. 10, 22; Acts i. 14.

the Evangelist, with whom "we" stayed at Caesarea,[1] and Mnason, the "original disciple," who accompanied Paul and his company, including Luke, to Jerusalem, and was to give them lodging there,[2] would be good sources for all the earlier narratives of the Acts. On the whole, it is obvious that St. Luke had very good opportunities of "tracing accurately from the first" the incidents of our Lord's life from His birth to His Ascension, and the beginnings of the Church before he himself became an eye-witness of its expansion. We do not claim infallibility for him in detail. But we have the best reason to claim for him that he is a careful and well-informed historian in direct access to those "who from the first were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word" --which is the claim of his preface.

His narrative is coloured by his disposition, which is apparent. He loves to emphasize the humility and poverty of Christ and His companions, and our Lord's insistence on the blessing of poverty and the danger of wealth; he loves to bring out the mercy of Jesus and the readiness of the divine forgiveness, which He proclaimed and ministered; he loves to recall all that dignifies womanhood; he hates controversy, we should suppose, and loves peace; and probably he minimizes the amount of division of opinion, as between Judaizers and Paulinists, that there was in the first Church. But after all it was the peace party which prevailed. And an historian like Tacitus is not supposed to be a better historian because he retails the scandals of an earlier generation. In fact, the special characteristics of our Lord which he brings to the front were, we have reason to believe,[1] really His characteristics—humility, meekness, and gentleness. It is James the Lord's brother, who would have been claimed by the Judaizers as their leader, who speaks of "the wisdom that is from above" as "first pure, then peaceable, concessive, easy to be entreated, without partiality, and without hypocrisy," and declares that "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by them that make peace." He suggests that the peaceable spirit in the early Church was the prevailing spirit, and would win the day, and that the violence of party, which he contrasts with it, was destined to fail. Thus we shall not call St. Luke a less good historian because he preferred to stress this spirit of peace at work, and to throw somewhat into the shade the acrimony of partisans.

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[1] Acts xxi. 8.

[2] Acts xxi. 16.

There is one other matter, which concerns the Gospels generally, to which attention must be called. The destruction of Jerusalem, like, for instance, the French Revolution, created a chasm in national history between what went before and what came after. All the whole apparatus of the national life of Israel—its parties, its proceedings, its temple-worship, its interests, its centralization—was destroyed with the destruction of the city and temple by the Romans in A.D. 70. A later writer who had not lived in the old order would never have recovered its atmosphere. But all the Gospels reflect that atmosphere faithfully. The conclusion. emphasized by Sanday, Harnack, and many others, is that the materials of the Gospels were practically all in being before the destruction of Jerusalem, and that the after-time had no serious effect upon them. This conclusion we may, I think, take for certain.

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[1] See 2 Cor. x. 1.

I should advise a student to proceed at this point to review the status of the Epistles, and to leave the question of the First and Last Gospels. But a word may be said in explanation of this course.

As to our St. Matthew, it appears to have been taken by the Church from the first as the premier Gospel, and there is no sign of disparagement. The well-known fragment of Papias tells us that "Matthew compiled the *Logia* in the Hebrew speech, and each man interpreted them according to his ability." I think Lightfoot proved that the word *Logia* (oracles)[1] might refer to a Gospel containing incidents and discourses alike, like our First Gospel. Also Papias appears to mean by his use of the past tense "interpreted"—that by his time there was an authoritative Greek version. But our version does not seem to be a translation from a Hebrew original; nor does it seem to be likely that one of the Apostles would have been content to rely for the scheme and incidents of his Gospel upon St. Mark's confessedly very imperfect selection of incidents, as fully as our First Gospel does. What appears to be most probable, on the whole, is that St. Matthew really composed in Aramaic a collection of our Lord's discourses with some connecting narrative, and that someone unknown, not long after A.D. 70, used this collection, in combination with St. Mark's narrative, and some other material which came to him, to produce our first Gospel "according to Matthew." We can rely with great confidence on the bulk of the discourses of our Lord in St. Matthew; but where there are important differences in discourse or narrative between St. Matthew and St. Mark on the one hand, and St. Matthew and St. Luke on the other, and where we have independent narratives in "St. Matthew" without other support, we want to know, and can find no answer to our question, whether we are dealing with the Apostle or with some unknown Palestinian disciple.[1] In some three cases we have to admit that prophecies from the Old Testament have been allowed to modify the details of the narrative of the First Gospel,[2] and in connexion with our Lord's death and burial the author introduces material which it is difficult to believe to be historical. On the whole, it must be admitted that our St. Matthew presents in some aspects an unknown factor and an unsolved question, and (though it affects a very small area of the whole) we had better rest content at starting with St. Mark and St. Luke; though even so it must be said that the whole of the Sermon on the Mount and the parables in chapter xiii and elsewhere, and the famous ending of chapter xi, "Come unto me," even though they are unsupported in the other Gospels, are self-evidencing and not easily questionable.

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[1] There is another interpretation of this word which would make St. Matthew's work a compilation of O.T. "oracles" which were believed to have been fulfilled in Christ. But I think it more probable that Eusebius's interpretation was correct.

I have recently elsewhere expressed my reasons for believing that St. John, the son of Zebedee, is really the author of the Fourth Gospel, and that his scheme of the history must be taken as true and used to supplement the account given in the Synoptic narratives, with which he was plainly acquainted, and which he intended to supplement and occasionally correct, and that the discourses of the Fourth Gospel must be taken as recovering from oblivion very real and important features in our Lord's teaching. To this last point we shall have to return later, when we are considering the nature of our Lord's person. Nevertheless, inasmuch as a student would find himself " up against " the great mass of critical opinion in holding this position, I should advise him to defer the question till he has felt the ground secure under him on the basis of the two Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke.

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[1] In the case of the story of the Birth of our Lord (Matt. i., ii.) and of His reported sayings about the Church (Matt. xvi.) we shall have occasion to examine the trustworthiness of our first Gospel later on.

[2] Matt. xxi. 2 (the introduction of the ass beside the colt); Matt. xxvi. 15, cf. xxvii. 3–10 (the specification of thirty pieces of silver); Matt. xxvii. 34 (the gall).

Thus, then, we may take it for granted that in these two Gospels we have narratives by known men, whose opportunities for knowing what the " eye-witnesses " recorded were as good as could be desired, and whose narratives as we read them are, in a high degree, convincing. We do well to saturate our minds in these two documents. We shall find ourselves on the most solid historical ground. Nothing, I think, could resist this conviction, except a dogmatic presupposition that the supernatural things there recorded cannot have actually happened. This dogmatic presupposition we shall have to investigate carefully. For the present let us leave it out of account, and let the Gospels make their full impression upon us.

From time to time we may meet people who are moved by the consideration that if the astonishing things recorded in the Gospels and Acts had really happened, we should have heard more about it in contemporary secular historians, especially the Jewish historian Josephus. But in fact this argument, so far as concerns the historians of the Empire, has no force. " Miracles," such as are commonly recorded in the Gospels and Acts, were also reported in the Roman Empire in connexion with sacred shrines and persons.[1] And though, as will appear, the miracles connected with our Lord have a very distinctive character, the mere report of them would not have stirred the sort of excitement which it would excite in the modern world. The common people of the pagan world would have said that such things had often happened, and the intellectual sceptics that such things had always been believed by the vulgar. Moreover, it was not the habit of the literary classes to pay any attention to popular religions. We are led to believe that the mystery religions, with their rituals and sacraments, were among the most important features of the society of the Empire in the period coinciding with the spread of Christianity, but the allusions to them in general literature are very meagre.[2]

Thus what Tacitus, the only serious historian of the early Empire who remains to us (writing A.D. 115–17), tells us about the origin of Christianity is as much as we should expect. The name Christian, he says[3]—he is writing to account for Nero's treatment of them—comes from Christ, who was sent to execution, under Tiberius, by the procurator Pontius Pilate; "but the execrable superstition, repressed for the moment, broke out again not only in Judaea, the home of this plague, but also in Rome, where all horrible and shameful things flow together and maintain themselves." But more, no doubt, might be expected from the Jewish historian Josephus, who wrote in the last quarter of the first century. He gives us a brief but interesting account of John the Baptist and of Herod's reason for putting him to death. He also gives an account of the putting to death by the high priest of James "the brother of Jesus who is called Christ." As the text stands, there is also some account of Jesus Christ Himself. As it stands, however, it bears obvious marks of a Christian hand.[1] It is disputed whether it is merely interpolated by a Christian or whether it is wholly a forgery. Whichever be the case, we have evidence enough that Josephus knew something about Christ. But when he wrote, Christianity was dreaded by the imperial authorities. Josephus wrote to make them favourable to the Jews. His motive for silence about Christianity was obvious enough. And if he was almost wholly silent, it cannot reasonably be suggested that it was from ignorance.[2]

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[1] E.g. The miracles of Vespasian recorded by Tacitus and Suetonius, see below, p. 258.

[2] "No Roman historian, from Tacitus to the scandal-mongers of the third and fourth centuries, ever wrote imperially. Their outlook was strictly confined within the walls of Rome" (Platnauer, *Septimius Severus*, Oxford, 1918, p. 25). "Of the manner in which the Empire was ruled, of the condition of the provinces, they [the Roman aristocratic writers] tell us little, and probably did not care to know much" (Pelham, *Outline of Roman History*, Rivington, p. 436).

[3] *Annals*, xv. 44. It is possible that Tacitus borrowed what he said about Christianity, as well as what he said about the Jews, from the *Historiae* of Pliny the Elder (A.D. 23–79). See Batiffol, *The Credibility of the Gospel* (Eng. trans., Longmans), p. 36.

II

The Second and Third Gospels, then, and the Acts of the Apostles are by known men—John Mark, a member of the original apostolic company in Jerusalem, where he lived in his mother's home, and then the trusted companion of Barnabas, Paul, and Peter, and Luke "the beloved physician," the companion of St. Paul; and these men had the best opportunities of intercourse with those "who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word," and their narratives are found extraordinarily convincing. We have, then, here documents which, judged by the standards of history, are fully trustworthy, and they would have been, no doubt, unhesitatingly received were it not for the supernatural features of which they are full, and the tremendous claim upon men's lives and thought which they involve. Whether these features and this claim constitute any good reason for disputing their trustworthiness we shall have very carefully to consider. We leave the matter now and proceed to consider the rest of the documents of the New Testament—especially the Epistles.

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[1] Dr. W. E. Barnes, Hulsean Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, denies this: see *Testimony of Josephus to J. C.* (S.P.C.K.).

[2] The whole matter is discussed by Batiffol, *op. cit.*, lect. i.

But first something must be said about the presuppositions of the Epistles and about their relation to the Gospels.

The Epistles, like St. Luke's Gospel,[1] were not written to convey to the converts their first instruction. This they presuppose. And it is very important to observe exactly what is presupposed. Thus (i) there is constant mention of the holy names of the Father, the Son—the Lord Jesus, the Christ—and the Holy Spirit, as of familiar persons, and of our Lord's atoning and saving work, and of angels and evil spirits. On these subjects instruction is plainly presupposed. (ii) The disorders arising in the Church at Corinth at the Lord's Supper and a particular phase of opinion about resurrection lead St. Paul to restate precisely what he had delivered to them at his first coming in the form of a narrative about the institution of the Eucharist and the death, burial, resurrection, and appearances after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.[1] In the latter case he specifies that what he communicated to them was the same message as the other apostles delivered. St. Paul elsewhere alludes to our Lord's being of the seed of David, and to the moral characteristics of his life, " meekness and gentleness " and humility, and to specific words of the Lord,[2] as to familiar things. How much teaching about the life of Jesus on earth was given to St. Paul's converts we cannot exactly say. But the apparently quite accidental disclosures of his first teaching about the Eucharist and the Resurrection lead us to feel that the amount may have been considerable. St. Peter's converts received, no doubt, the substance of St. Mark's Gospel, so far as that comes from St. Peter. (iii) There was definite instruction in moral duties and in the Day of the Lord and the judgement to come.[3] (iv) The Epistles presuppose rudimentary instruction in the meaning of the sacraments.[4] (v) An acquaintance with and acceptance of the Old Testament as inspired of God is always assumed. All these elements constituted *the tradition* (paradosis)—the teaching which was first delivered by the Apostles and which it was the primary business of the Church to hand on [5]—this was the " sound doctrine," the " faith once for all delivered." This oral instruction, then, given to the first converts, was the basis on which the superstructure of all the written documents of the New Testament was reared.

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[1] Luke i. 4, "That thou mightest know the certainty (or accuracy) concerning the things wherein *thou wast instructed*"—doubtless when Theophilus became a Christian. The instruction was oral, no doubt. But the word is quite general.

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[1] 1 Cor. xi. 23 ff., xv. 1 ff.

[2] Rom. i. 3; 2 Cor. x. 1; Phil. ii. 8; 1 Cor. vii. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 15.

[3] 1 Thess. iv. 1–3; 2 Thess. iii. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 2; Heb. vi. 2.

[4] Rom. vi. 3; 1 Cor. xi. 23; Heb. vi. 2.

[5] 1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. i. 13, 14, ii. 2; Jude 2.

Next to this in order of time came, not the written Gospels as we have them, but the Epistles or most of them. St. Paul's Epistles disclose how manifold and diverse were the special difficulties and dangers of his different Churches, at Thessalonica, in Galatia, at Corinth, at Colossae:—hence different occasional letters dealing with these difficulties, and emphasizing and expounding the meaning of the Gospel in different aspects according to local needs. Some of the Epistles, indeed, have more of the nature of formal treatises, e.g. the Epistles to the Romans, Ephesians, and Hebrews; but most of them are markedly occasional, and need to be read in the light of their circumstances.

Then, as time went on, the need of written accounts of the Lord's life, of the most authoritative character obtainable, became evident, and the Synoptic Gospels were written, all, I think, before or just after the date of the destruction of Jerusalem. The wonderful thing about them is that, though St. Mark and St. Luke, at least, had been living in the atmosphere of St. Paul's preaching, yet their record of the Lord's life is almost wholly free from anything which suggests later controversies or developments. They have been microscopically examined for "Paulinisms," but almost nothing suggestive of perversion, in the interests of later controversies or tendencies, is to be discovered —in spite of the fact that the tendencies of the time were full of danger, and that "words of the Lord" adapted to the needs of the Church would have been found very useful. Nevertheless, these two Gospels remain, as far as we can see, strictly within the limits of the history as it was, though the authors knew so well how the Gospel and the Church had developed.

III

Now we proceed to review the material presented to us by the Epistles, and to ask how they stand as regards authenticity.

As regards St. Paul's Epistles, I will content myself with citing the conclusions of an English scholar who has more confidence than I can profess in the methods of German critics and their English followers, and who has published an able survey of the present condition of the historical criticism of the New Testament.

"The main result of our discussion has been to establish the fact that out of thirteen Epistles traditionally attributed to St. Paul we may accept eight (i.e. 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians) as being genuine beyond any serious dispute. Of the remaining five, there is still an appreciable hesitation felt with regard to 2 Thessalonians and Ephesians—a hesitation for which we failed to discover adequate grounds. The authorship of the Pastoral Epistles must still be regarded as a problem which has not yet been satisfactorily solved. The position of the Pauline Epistles in the critical world of to-day is one which affords the deepest gratification, and is a fact of far-reaching importance. . . . Twentieth-century criticism has thus restored to the Christian Church an inheritance which is priceless in value."[1] I do not propose to stop here over the question of the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles, though I do not myself doubt that in their whole substance they are St. Paul's.[1] It will suffice at this stage that we should be able to study the other ten Epistles as his genuine writings and reserve the question of the Pastorals. The anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews is certainly not St. Paul's, nor have we adequate grounds for attempting to determine its authorship. But it is a document of great importance, because it is the only document of the New Testament which deals at length with the High Priesthood of Christ. The writer does not claim to be among "those who heard" the Lord, but among their first disciples.[2] The most probable opinion is that the little treatise or epistle was written to a Jewish group in Rome or Italy. It was used by Clement of Rome towards the end of the century. And it appears to me fairly certain that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem. It is true that the sanctuary which the author describes is rather, in its details, the tabernacle than any of the later temples. Nevertheless, I think the author could not have referred so frequently to the sacrificial system of the Jews as still in being,[3] or have refrained from pointing the moral of its complete destruction, if he had written after A.D. 70. St. Peter's First Epistle can be confidently taken for genuine,[4] and there is no sufficient reason why we should doubt the authenticity of the beautiful Epistle of St. James, who was put to death by the Jews in A.D. 62, or the later Epistle of his brother Jude. The three Epistles ascribed to St. John undoubtedly cohere with one another and with the Fourth Gospel.[5] The only book of the New Testament which it seems to me the evidence shows to be pseudonymous is the Second Epistle of Peter. That, indeed, claims to have been written by an apostle; and it was as being Peter's that it was at last and after much hesitation accepted by the Church into the canon. But we have no reason to claim infallibility for the literary judgment of the Church, and the evidence against it seems to me to be cogent. Nothing remains to consider but the Apocalypse. Whether this book belongs to the period following the persecution of Nero, i.e. whether it was written just before A.D. 70, or whether it belongs to the persecution of Domitian at the end of the century, or whether different parts of it must be assigned to each period, is a very difficult question. Whether, again, it can be ascribed to the same author as the Fourth Gospel and the three Epistles is also an open question. The external evidence is exceedingly strong for ascribing it to St. John the Apostle. But, at any rate, it was written at one of the two dates named above, by a prophet called John, who claims both direct inspiration and authority such as seems apostolic, and it discloses how he interpreted the conflict between the Church and the now persecuting Empire, and what issue of the conflict he foresaw, with a passion and a power which belong to no other Apocalypse.

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[1] Maurice Jones, *The New Testament in the Twentieth Century* (Macmillan, 1914), p. 293.

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[1] See appended note, p. 213.

[2] Heb. ii. 3.

[3] Heb. viii. 4 f., ix. 6, 9, x. 1 ff., xiii. 10 ff. See Westcott's *Hebrews*, p. xlii.

[4] See Jones, *op. cit.*, cap. vi.

[5] See my *Exposition of St. John's Epistles* (Murray, 1920), Preface.

Enough has, I hope, been said to satisfy one who is beginning the study of the origins of the Christian Church and its real character and claim that he could use the documents of the New Testament as a whole with confidence in their authenticity and trustworthiness, if they were records of ordinary events or of an ordinary human person. It is, as we shall see reason to believe, not historical criticism properly so called, but something quite different which has led to their being disputed.

APPENDED NOTE

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES[1]

The following facts seem to me to constitute a valid ground for accepting their authenticity.

1. St. Paul's deliverance from his first captivity must be accepted as a fact, mainly on the ground that Clement clearly implies that he fulfilled his intention of going to Spain (see above, p. 189 n. 3). This leaves room for the movements of the apostle referred to in the Pastorals.

2. The ecclesiastical situation disclosed in the Pastorals harmonizes with that described by Clement as arising *before the death of the apostles*—and by the apostles he means especially St. Peter and St. Paul. He is writing to the Corinthians about the authority of the presbyters or "bishops." He describes their origin: how Christ was sent forth from God and the Apostles from Christ—how they preached in country and towns and "appointed their first fruits, then they had tested them in the Spirit, for bishops and deacons" of the future converts. Later he describes how "the Apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife about the title of the bishop. Therefore for this reason, having received perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the aforesaid, and afterwards they gave an additional injunction that, if they (the aforesaid presbyter-bishops and deacons) should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministry." What this additional injunction was is implied in the following sentence: "Those then appointed by them [the apostles] or afterwards by other distinguished men, with the consent of the whole Church, etc."[2] Here it appears that the additional provision made by the apostles was that there should be, after they were gone, "distinguished men" with an authority like theirs to appoint presbyter-bishops and deacons. This provision for the future was made, Clement asserts,

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[1] For an amended form of this note see *Can We then Believe?* p. 220.

[2] Clement, cc. 42 and 44.

while the apostles were alive, but doubtless in view of their death. And I think this assertion exactly corresponds with the situation of the Pastoral Epistles. Timothy and Titus were such distinguished men, clothed with an authority like that of the apostles, and especially to appoint presbyters.

3. The personal relations of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus and other persons, but especially to Timothy, disclosed in the Epistles, and the accurate delineations of character involved, constitute an unmistakable evidence of genuineness. The Second Epistle to Timothy is from this point of view especially marked as genuine, but there are similar marks in the other Epistles, and they are all unmistakably bound together by unity of style and subject.

4. The special features of these Epistles are such as belong to their purpose or circumstances. For instance, the moment is just such as would bring to the fore the conservative and disciplinary side of St. Paul's mind. No one can read the First Epistle to the Corinthians without seeing that this side of his character was always there and often in evidence.

5. The real difficulty is in the style and vocabulary. That is in many respects markedly different from the other Epistles of St. Paul. I should be disposed to find the best explanation of this in the supposition that St. Paul used for these Epistles an amanuensis, to whom (perhaps because he did not write shorthand) he left much discretion in wording the sentences—content that they should express his ideas which he had no doubt made plain: on this, I would refer to Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 280–91.

CHAPTER IX

THE PREJUDICE OF CRITICISM

OUR survey of the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke—for we left the First and Fourth Gospels aside for the moment—has disposed us to believe them. We found that the writers must have had the freest access to original witnesses of the events which they describe. Their intentions were conspicuously simple and honest. They appear to have no design except to record things as they happened. It is true that in their narratives we are presented with a person and with events quite unparalleled in the history of the world. But we have found ourselves, as we have read and re-read these records, quite unable to believe that we have here a work of imagination. The portrait is convincing. The elements in the narrative—the things done and the things said—cohere in a wonderful unity. Moreover, when we read the Epistles, while we were struck with the vivid picture which they give us of the life and interests of the earliest Christian Churches, we made this note: that these interests and controversies of the apostolic Churches, though St. Mark and St. Luke must have been intimately acquainted with them, do not appear to have discoloured the narratives of the first experiences of the apostles while our Lord was still on earth. Neither in the phraseology nor in the substance of the Gospels can we discover any considerable traces of these later interests. Thus we find ourselves disposed to take the Gospels for what they profess to be, and to give them an open-minded hearing.

But we find that this is exactly what the intellect of Europe for the last seventy years has, as a whole—so far as it has paid attention to the origins of Christianity—been steadily refusing to do. It has been occupied in substantially rewriting the Gospels. It has been producing an " historical Jesus," markedly unlike the original in the Gospels, or rather several discordant pictures all unlike the original in many most important respects. Now, when we set ourselves to examine the cause of this undoubted fact, I think we shall find it to be that the intellect of Europe has been in rebellion against the miraculous and generally the supernatural, of which the Gospels are confessedly full. This presupposition, which is strictly philosophical rather than historical—that miraculous and supernatural events cannot really have occurred—has made necessary that radical reconstruction of " the Jesus of history," which presents Him in a form so unlike that which the Gospels present in so many ways.

The ground of this rebellion against the Gospels as they stand is very vividly presented in Renan's *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse*, in which he discloses to us the intellectual motives which led to his repudiation of the principles of his education in Catholic seminaries, and account for the version of the history of Christ which he gave the world in his *Vie de Jésus*. He speaks contemptuously of historical criticism as a science. It can claim no real authority. It can never really reconstruct the past. " The regret of my life is to have chosen for my studies a class of researches which can never become authoritative [*qui ne s'imposera jamais*], and which will remain always in the stage of interesting considerations about a reality which has for ever vanished."[1] What really came to control his imagination and his mind was the majestic certitude of the physical sciences. The spirit of the physical sciences repudiates the miraculous, and can find no such evidence of miracles having ever occurred as its canons of proof would require; and with the miraculous it repudiates the whole category of the supernatural. "The affirmation that everything in the world is of the same colour, that there is no particular supernatural nor special revelation [*révélation momentanée*) presented itself as authoritative in an absolute manner over our spirit. The clear scientific view of a universe, where no free will superior to that of man is at work in any appreciable manner, became since the beginning of 1846 the immovable anchor whence we have never departed."[2] "People who are in accord with positive science do not admit the special supernatural, the miracle," though they are capable of idealism.[3] So far the brilliant Frenchman. The prejudice with which he reapproached the Gospel story is made quite plain. But the Frenchman had already got his inspiration from Germany.[4]

Of German Biblical criticism in its application to the New Testament, and especially to the Gospels, we have recently had a brilliant survey by Albert Schweitzer in a book which he called *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*,[5] which means the history of the criticism of the Gospels since Lessing published (in 1774–9) the famous *Wolfenbüttel fragments* (the fragments of his friend Reimarus, issued by him after Reimarus's death from Wolfenbüttel in Brunswick, where he was librarian), down to Wrede's publication of *The Messianic Secret in the Gospels* in 1901. It is a brilliantly written history of a process which, as far as the study of documents is concerned, can be said to tend towards agreement in results, but as far as concerns the picture presented of the " Jesus of history," shows an astonishing divergence, which remains unreconciled. There is the " Jesus of Liberal Theology," who preaches the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man—all that is most attractive to the modern humanitarian spirit. This is the theology represented in Harnack's famous lectures, *What is Christianity?* and it is familiar enough in this country; and there is the less familiar " Jesus " of the apocalyptic school, represented by Schweitzer himself, who is an apocalyptic prophet or visionary enthusiast, of a fanatical type, deluded by the conviction of the immediate arrival of the world catastrophe and the Kingdom of God, in which he himself is to be the predestined Messiah or Son of Man. The differences between these two presentations of the " historical Jesus " is sufficiently startling. It is not now the time to dwell on them. But any student of Schweitzer's pages can perceive that what enables critics to form such strangely different estimates of an historical figure is that both schools are agreed in repudiating such large elements in the records as they stand—not on grounds of criticism, but on grounds of *a priori* assumption—that the question of what is to be allowed to remain becomes largely a question to be decided by arbitrary choice. The fundamental assumption of all the critics whom Schweitzer takes seriously is the assumption that the miraculous did not occur, and that the theological beliefs associated with the acceptance of miracles have vanished with them. Jesus, as Reimarus said, must have remained "within the limits of humanity." That He did certain cures which seemed to the people miraculous is not to be denied, and is quite explicable. But other miracles, such as must really involve a supernatural power, have no basis in fact.[1] Reimarus's thorough-going denials were not immediately acceptable. But they were revived by David Strauss, the first edition of whose *Life of Jesus* appeared to shock Europe in 1835. From him Schweitzer dates the final abandonment of the miraculous by German theology. Many things remain quite unsettled. "What has been gained is only that the exclusion of miracle from our view of history has been universally recognized as a principle of criticism, so that miracle no longer concerns the theologians either positively or negatively."[2]

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[1] *Souvenirs*, p. 263.

[2] pp. 337–8, 282.

[3] *Vie de Jésus*, Pref.

[4] *Souvenirs*, p. 291.

[5] In the English trans., *The Quest of the Historical Jesus.*

According to Schweitzer, there have been three great alternatives concerning Christ presented to criticism, of which the first was finally decided by Strauss, "either purely historical or purely supernatural."[3] The historical and the supernatural are to be regarded, we observe, as incompatible alternatives.

So it still appears to Harnack. If, as we have said, he now dates the documents very early, he is only the more sure that myths, such as the ascension of Jesus or His birth of a virgin, can form themselves very quickly.[4]

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[1] Schweitzer, pp. 17 ff.

[2] p. 111.

[3] The second alternative was "either Synoptic or Johannine." This was decided by Tübingen and Holtzmann. The third, clearly propounded afresh by Johann Weiss, is "either eschatological or non-eschatological." This remains still undecided.

[4] See Harnack, *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 158 f.; *The Date of the Synoptic Gospels*, p. 161.

Now, Schweitzer makes game of the "Liberal" Jesus and of that of Renan the Frenchman. "This professedly historical Jesus is not a purely historical figure, but one which has been artificially transplanted into history. . . . What is admitted as historical is just what the spirit of our time can take out of the records in order to assimilate it to itself." But we seem to see the same arbitrariness in the apocalyptic Jesus of Schweitzer. All these schools of critics start with an invincible, dominant prejudice. It may not indeed be so boldly expressed as with Strauss, whose (almost) sole consideration is declared to be that "in the person and acts of Jesus no supernaturalism shall be suffered to remain."[1] "He who would banish priests from the Church, must first banish miracles from religion." "Christianity is so living a power, and the problem as to its origin so rife in important consequences to the immediate present, that the student must be literally stupid whose interest in the determination of such a question can be strictly confined to the historical." The bias here is plain indeed! But though the bias is not so gross and palpable in other leaders of criticism as in Strauss, yet they have all of them in their minds a dominant presupposition, derived not really from historical science properly so-called, but from a certain philosophy of the universe, which we shall have to examine carefully—the presupposition that miracles are incredible, and are the expression of a supernaturalism which they reject. What this impossible supernaturalism exactly is, differs from critic to critic no doubt. Thus the limits of what can be rationally believed differ in different cases, but, as will be indicated directly, not only miracles, but the real incarnation of the Divine Son in human nature falls apparently for all these schools of critics outside the limits of the rationally credible.[1]

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[1] *New Life of Jesus*, i, p. xii. "This negation is for our object, which is prospective, and not merely retrospective and historical, a principal, if not the sole consideration. It consists in this: that in the person and acts of Jesus no supernaturalism shall be suffered to remain; nothing that can press upon the souls of men with the leaden weight of arbitrary, inscrutable authority." Cf. p. x.

This spirit of continental criticism—which for want of a better name we call rationalistic—is, I believe, logical in thus recognizing that what it is rejecting is not merely certain miraculous facts, but the whole conception of a supernatural incoming of God into human life which had sought to extrude Him, and into nature where men had sought to forget Him. And this spirit of continental criticism has had not a few representatives in England. It found expression in that strange anonymous book *Supernatural Religion*, which forty-six years ago began its meteoric and short-lived career, hailed triumphantly as the very expression of the best mind of the age, but passing rapidly under a cloud, owing chiefly to the critical exposure to which it was subjected at the hands of Lightfoot. To-day, a much better scholar and more competent thinker, Dr. Kirsopp Lake, is giving it powerful expression, in a much less malevolent but in a not much less trenchant form than was given it by Strauss.

But in England—perhaps only in England or the British Isles—we also find a group of scholars who are prepared to declare, or who strongly suspect, that miracles are, if not strictly impossible, yet in fact incredible, but who at the same time themselves hold the full supernatural faith in the incarnation of God the Son in the person of Jesus Christ, and who even profess some indignation that the orthodox faith of those who cannot accept the miraculous should be impugned. Of this group Dr. Sanday was the most conspicuous example. As is well known, that eminent scholar in the last years of his life, if he did not certainly deny the real occurrence of miracles, did at least seriously doubt it. But he was strenuous in maintaining that such doubt or positive rejection was quite compatible with Christian orthodoxy. He was indignant that anyone should question the right of those who repudiate miracles still to recite in good faith the Catholic creeds, because the essence of those creeds lies not in certain specific miraculous facts, but in a certain specific and supernatural faith. We are not at the moment concerned to discuss questions connected with the person of Christ. We are only concerned to get clearly into our minds Dr. Sanday's opinion. He wrote[1]: "The central truth which it is most important to guarantee is the true Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly God and truly Lord, very God and at the same time very man. I imagine that, if we were to cross-question ourselves as to what we mean when we recite the Creeds, it would be something like that in its simplest form. . . . We should all agree that anything really less than this would be hypocritical. The man who, in his heart of hearts, really believed less ought not to stay where he is" (i.e. as a minister of the

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[1] As to miracles, the healings of the sick are admitted to have occurred in some sense, i.e. the recorded healings are not more than exaggerations of what actually occurred. But what are excluded are the "nature miracles"—e.g. the raisings of the dead, or the feeding of the five thousand, or the walking on the water, or the birth of the Virgin, or the corporal resurrection of Christ.

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[1] *Bishop Gore's Challenge to Criticism* (Longmans, 1914), p. 9. Some later words of Dr. Sanday lead me to doubt if he held to the position so clearly defined above.

Church of England). I read these words when they were first published with not a little astonishment—as for other reasons with which we are now not concerned, so because they imply so naïve a confidence that miracles can be discarded and the old conviction of faith about the person of Christ retained in all its simplicity. I was the more surprised because in the same pamphlet[1] Dr. Sanday speaks in highly complimentary terms of Dr. Loofs "as one of the best and most cautious of the Germans," and refers us to his little book *What is the Truth about Jesus Christ?*[2] For what is the point of this book? It is to declare that the ancient orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation is out of the question for the modern critical scholar. Dr. Loofs holds what in technical terminology would be called an Adoptionist doctrine of Christ and a Sabellian view of God—that is, he holds that Christ was a man possessed in some undefinable and unique manner with the Divine Spirit so as to make Him the revealer of God and the beginning of a new manhood. But that "the historical Jesus is the pre-existent Son of God" he not only repudiates, but declares that all learned theologians repudiate and must repudiate. "Those who are impartial enough," he writes, to see certain points of his argument, "are thereby convinced that the orthodox Christology cannot give us the correct interpretation of the historical person of Jesus. And there is hardly a single learned theologian—I know of none in Germany—who defends the orthodox Christology in its unaltered form."

But we need not go to Germany in order to convince ourselves that the repudiation of miracles is based on a state of mind which will have much wider effect than the repudiation of certain supposed events. How indeed should it be otherwise? For the repudiation of miracles cuts very deep into the Gospel narratives. Thus Dr. Sanday thinks that the miracles of feeding had a basis in fact. Our Lord did really organize and preside at a quasi-sacramental meal. Some small portion of food, such as was available, was distributed so that, as at a sacramental table, all should feel they had been sharing together. The narrative, he says, is all true except that they were not "filled." It was not a case of a satisfying meal. Afterwards the tendency among the disciples to fashion miracles for their master on the analogy of the Old Testament miracles brought it about that the reputed miracle of Elisha, when he fed the hundred men with the twenty loaves of barley and the fresh ears of corn,[1] was reproduced on a much larger scale and attached to our Lord, on the basis of what had really been not a satisfying of men's appetites with food but a piece of sacramental symbolism. But this manipulation of the narrative cuts very deep. Not only the word "filled," and (it should be added) the collection of the fragments after the meal, must vanish, but the whole motive and setting of the story is altered. For in the story there is not the suggestion of anything else, except that Jesus was determined to "satisfy" a crowd with food, when His resources were manifestly much too small. It is only His compassion for men's physical needs that is in view (Mark vi. 24), and then the miraculous power that was in His pity. There is also no suggestion of any incident in the Old Testament as a modifying force. If what really happened was only the sacramental distribution of minute fragments, then plainly our narrative in Mark, although the context indicates that Peter must have been present, is not Peter's story, nor the story of any eye-witness, but only a reflection several degrees removed, upon which so much imagination has been expended that its original character is quite obliterated. An eye-witness might be wrong in the figures. The seven loaves might become five or the four thousand persons five thousand. But the whole character of the incident could not be altered in his memory.

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[1] p. 29.

[2] English trans. (Scribners), 1913.

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[1] 2 Kings iv. 42. This interpretation of our Lord's miracle as an imaginative exaggeration of Elisha's is due first to Reimarus. It is curious that the miracle of Elisha as recorded in the book of Kings appears to be hardly miraculous. Twenty loaves and an undefined quantity of ears of corn could really supply something worthy to be called a meal to a hundred men.

To take another instance from the critical reconstruction of the Gospel story—if the tomb of Jesus was not really found empty on the morning of the Sunday after the crucifixion, the story in the Gospel of Mark must be far removed from the original experience. Once more, if the "naturalists'" prejudice is to prevail, the miracles of healing must in most cases have been at least greatly exaggerated before they reached their Gospel form. No one could give a naturalistic interpretation of ten lepers (in popular estimation) all simultaneously suddenly healed,[1] or even of one. How then, if the story has been so fundamentally transformed, can it be plausibly pleaded that the words of Jesus Christ (on which the theological creed is built) have escaped similar distortion and exaggeration? Do men exaggerate the actions, or do they in fact become exaggerated, more than the words of great leaders and heroes?

It will not, then, surprise us to discover that English critics, like those of France and Germany, plainly regard the record of the teaching of our Lord as open to as much suspicion and requiring as much revision, before it can be accepted as historical, as the record of the miracles. Thus we are assured by Dr. Glover that Jesus did not call Himself the Son of God,[1] though there is no fact better certified in our foundation documents than that He did; and by Dr. Rashdall that He probably did not proclaim Himself the final judge of all men,[2] and that He never spoke of His death as to have an atoning or ransoming value for the souls of men [3]—again in spite of the fundamental records; and by Dr. Inge and others that He founded no Church and instituted no sacraments.[4] Dr. Kirsopp Lake will not allow it to be probable that He even called Himself the Christ (in the specific sense) or the Son of Man, or was so called during His lifetime,[5] though here, I think, most of the other critics whom I have named would dissent from him. But Dr. Glover, again, assures us that St. Paul was the first to call Him "the Lord."[6] More than this, though He is represented so plainly as speaking with infallible authority, we are constantly warned that He was plainly under a delusion about the immediate coming of the kingdom, and shared the popular superstition about devils and their possession of men [7]; and others of the left wing warn us that we cannot rely upon His sinlessness in any strict sense.

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[1] See Luke xvii. 14 and v. 12; cf. Mark i. 40.

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[1] *Conflict of Religions*, p. 138: "terms which Jesus did not use."

[2] *Conscience and Christ*, p. 48.

[3] *Idea of Atonement*, pp. 27 ff.

[4] *Outspoken Essays*, pp. 227, 249, and elsewhere.

[5] *Landmarks*, pp. 48–52.

[6] *Conflict*, p. 156.

[7] All these points enumerated above will come up for discussion in due course in the next volume. It is worth noting that the popular rejection of the belief in the devil, as a mere superstition, is not so modern as people suppose. Fielding's landlady in *Tom Jones* cries, "But as the parson told us last Sunday, nobody believes in the devil nowadays."

Now, the noticeable thing about these multiplied denials is that they are based on no critical grounds—that is, they all contradict our foundation documents—St. Mark and Q. Thus in these documents our Lord again and again calls Himself Son of God, and is so called, in a sense clearly not applicable to other men.[1] In the Sermon on the Mount[2] and in several—surely indisputable—parables His position as final judge, even of men's secret motives, is clearly implied. In two passages of St. Mark the atoning or ransoming value of His death is apparent, and His identification of Himself with the suffering servant of Isaiah is elsewhere evident.[3] That He founded a Church and instituted sacraments intended to be permanent is not only asserted or implied in the Gospels, but is necessary to explain the action of the Church as recorded in the opening of the Acts, and presupposed in the Epistles; and so far as concerns the Eucharist, it is declared by St. Paul as part of the tradition which he delivered.[4] So, again, Jesus is called Lord in the Acts[5] in the supreme sense some time before St. Paul was converted; and the title must have been so familiar to the Aramaic-speaking Church of Judaea that it passed into St. Paul's Greek Churches in its Aramaic form, *Maranatha*, "Come, O Lord!" But over this ground we shall have to go again when we face the question, What think ye of Christ? All that

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[1] See Mark xiii. 32 and xii. 6, xiv. 61–2; Matt. xi. 27 = Luke x. 22. If these words can be eliminated, anything can.

[2] Matt. vii. 22–3.

[3] This will be argued later.

[4] 1 Cor. xi. 24–5.

[5] Acts i. 36; cf. x 36.

I want now to indicate, and what I have, I think, made evident, is (1) that neither in the case of our scholars nor in that of the Germans is it anything that can be legitimately called criticism of the documents which is at the root of the denials which I have been enumerating: it is a certain intellectual presupposition about the miraculous and generally the supernatural; and (2) that Dr. Sanday's assumption, that the miraculous could be dropped out of the record without affecting the traditional belief in the teaching and person of Jesus, is not only wholly improbable in itself, but also contradicted by our experience at home as well as among continental scholars.

We must take it for granted, then, that the elimination of the miraculous cuts so deep into our documents as to render the whole foundation of fact insecure. The interval between the facts as they are assumed to have occurred without miracle and our earliest records, so full of miracle and the assumption of miracle, becomes so great that the historical Figure as He must have been becomes dim. How He is to be represented seems to depend on the arbitrary judgement of the particular critic, who may be of the Liberal Humanitarian school or of the Apocalyptic school or of some other. But, though some of the critics who repudiate the miraculous are more conservative than others, I cannot myself doubt that there is among such critics an inevitable trend towards a purely humanitarian estimate of the personality of Christ, that is, a repudiation of the conception of Jesus Christ, as the eternal Son of God for us men and for our salvation made flesh, which has possessed Christendom. It is quite plain, then, that what has to be freely and deeply scrutinized is the intellectual ground for the repudiation of the miraculous and the supernatural *a priori*. If this should turn out to be invalid, then, and only then, shall we have a chance of being able to apply real or free historical criticism to the Gospels.[1]

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[1] I wish to recall to mind some remarkable words of Bp. Creighton in a letter to Mrs. J. R. Green: see his *Life*, p. 330–1: "Historical criticism is not a science: it is only an investigation of the value of evidence. It rests on presuppositions which are derived from experience. I am disposed to believe what is analogous to my experience: my criticism is awakened by what is not analogous. The destructive criticism of the N.T. rests on the presupposition that miracles do not happen. As the writers of the N.T. record miracles, it is necessary to explain how those records came into being. A number of ingenious and plausible theories about their nature and authorship and gradual growth have consequently been formed. Their number and persistency seem to add to their force. You say, 'Why are they not refuted?' The only possible refutation of them is to show that, apart from the presuppositions on which they rest, their conclusions are not capable of positive proof. . . . The miracles connected with the person of Jesus are analogous to the spiritual experience of the believing Christian. Therefore he is not moved by the presupposition that they are contrary to nature. The real question in dispute is the conception of nature. Biblical criticism will not solve that question."

CHAPTER X

THE PREJUDICE EXAMINED

THE Synoptic Gospels, on grounds of external and internal evidence, claim acceptance as trustworthy historical documents. But the picture they present of the Christ is that of a "supernatural" person, and they are full of miraculous incidents. Any exclusion of the supernatural and miraculous from the narratives cuts so deep into their substance as to leave the residue incoherent, and the person described so dim and uncertain that the most diverse representations of Him have been given. Take the Gospels as they stand, on the other hand, and the picture has been felt over long ages to be in a high degree coherent and impressive. Nothing, it would seem, can justify the elimination of the elements objected to, except an *a priori* conviction that miracles either absolutely cannot have happened or at least are in fact incredible. The actual evidence, however, we shall have to consider very carefully. But undoubtedly the mind of the critical world for two generations has been that miracles, however apparently well certified, cannot in fact have happened, or at least that even very good evidence cannot persuade us to believe that they have happened. And inasmuch as historical evidence never can be really compulsory, there is an unreality about a good deal of the recent discussion of it. We must go back upon the presupposition. Is this presupposition that " nature " is a system closed and complete in itself, so that the idea of an " intrusion " into it of anything " from beyond," or the idea of any " interruption " of its regular law or order, is unthinkable—is this presupposition rational and tenable ?

To justify this way of putting the question, we must seek to define with sufficient exactness what is meant by the supernatural and the miraculous. Let it be granted, then, that there is a cosmos, or world of order and law, with which experience familiarizes men, and which science investigates with ever-increasing confidence that nothing will be found there disconnected or arbitrary. Let it be granted also that (say) the physical resurrection of Christ from the dead, or His feeding of the five thousand with the five barley loaves and the two fishes (or further the personality of Christ as a whole) does present itself in this *cosmos* as something which it cannot account for—postulating some power at work of which it knows nothing. Let it be granted, finally, that these events are supposed to occur for this very reason—because instinctively and inevitably men cannot attribute them to " nature," but will be driven to see in them signs that the power behind nature, the power of God the Creator, is through them giving signs to men of a special purpose to which their attention is thereby effectively called. Then we seem to have got a sort of definition of a miracle. It is an occurrence in the process of nature of something which nature, that is, the experienced order, cannot account for, and which constrains men to recognize a special or extraordinary action of God calling attention to a special purpose. And the supernatural is all that constrains men to believe that nature with its customary order is not closed or complete in itself, but part of a larger and higher world of existence from which it is not separated by any unsurmountable barrier.

That will suffice for the moment. Obviously the word supernatural is a word which raises scruples in the mind of the believer in God. It suggests a nature which goes of itself and seems to relegate God to a sphere beyond, from which He "intervenes" in nature, as if He were not there all along, the doer of all that is done. The believer in God would feel, quite truly, that the enlightened imagination always sees the visible order on the background of the invisible—sees God in all things and all things in God. The word "nature," he would say, should suggest the whole [1]; and should not ascribe a sort of completeness to what is only a dependent portion. This must be granted. Nevertheless, the visible world and its order and law has so impressed itself on the imagination of men, and moulded their language as a thing in itself, that we need the word nature to describe it, and the word supernatural to suggest whatever may lie in the unknown beyond. In the same way the idea of miracle may be objected to as suggesting that God is there most evident when something happens which is disconnected and disorderly. This impression we shall seek to remove. But to start with, I think we may accept the account of the miraculous and the supernatural given above as, even if roughly, giving the right impression and raising the right question—Is "nature" such a system, so self-complete and closed, whether demon-

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[1] Cf. a famous passage in Bp. Butler's *Analogy*, Part I, cap. i: "Persons' notions of what is natural will be enlarged in proportion to their greater knowledge," etc.

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strably so or so found in experience, as that we may pronounce incredible events in nature which its observed order cannot account for, and which can only be interpreted as special acts of God forcibly calling attention to a special purpose? Is there such a closed system? Is it the postulate of science? Or is it the impression so strongly conveyed by experience that we cannot get beyond it?

I

The conception of nature as a closed system appears first, I believe, formulated with sufficient distinctness by the Stoics.

> "Everything that happens is followed by something else, which is necessarily linked to it as to its cause, and is preceded by something to which it is linked as its cause. For nothing in the world exists or happens without a cause, since there is nothing in it which is detached and separated from the whole sum of preceding events. For if any uncaused movement were introduced, the world would be pulled asunder and dissevered, and would no longer remain for ever one, ruled according to a single order and arrangement."[1]

But the idea was reintroduced into the modern world by Spinoza. His God—the object of his intense intellectual passion—was simply great nature with its invariable laws, existing under the double mode of mind and extension or matter. This awful, impersonal being is the only substance which the intellect in man can legitimately recognize and legitimately worship. And the sway of its law is absolute. It excludes all possibility of any such freedom of wills as would admit of the occurrence of anything contingent—anything which full knowledge could not have certainly predicted—in the universe. Freedom in this sense belongs neither to man nor to God. And there is nothing knowable beyond nature or above its laws.[1]

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[1] This is from Alexander of Aphrodisias (c. A.D. 200), called "the exegete of Aristotle," but giving the Stoic idea of nature; cf. Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, i. 184, and J. Wendland, *Miracles and Christianity* (Hodder & Stoughton), p. 252.

It is this kind of conception of a self-complete and closed system of nature which appears as lying behind the denials of the miraculous in Strauss and Renan and in the German rationalists. And the question is—is it valid? It is no doubt the postulate of the physicist and the chemist. But is it simply a working postulate, which is found true and necessary in a group of sciences which take certain aspects or parts of nature in abstraction from the whole, but which cannot be taken as valid for the whole of experienced reality?

Let us test it by its applicability to the freedom of the will — the moral freedom of man — which, we contend, is a fact in experienced "nature." I think we shall find that the question of the reality of moral freedom, which has been already discussed, and the question of the credibility of miracles are at bottom one and the same question.

The idea of moral freedom is not in itself antagonistic to the idea of perfect law. A world of free beings can be conceived whose willing obedience to divine law would have resulted in a free world as completely dominated by or expressive of law as inanimate or irrational nature could be. So Dante magnificently conceives Paradise. There "God's will is our peace," and the slightest desire of departure from His will has become inconceivable. Law, as a burden, is transcended, but it is not abolished in a world where perfectly free love expresses itself as perfect order. But freedom of choice, though it need not involve any actual departure from order, involves the possibility of it, and has, in fact, resulted in world-wide lawlessness. Here, I say, we get to the crux of the whole question. No doubt the free will of men has been absurdly exaggerated. As a fact, it is strictly limited. There is no such thing as human independence. All the forces which any man employs, in choosing or carrying out his choice, are drawn from beyond himself. It need not be claimed that he can add to the sum of energy. His conditions again determine the channels along which he must use the powers which are available. Nevertheless, in the heart of this world of determinate and determined forces and laws there lies this mysterious and unique thing—free choice. As has been already argued, the choice of the will at the last analysis decides in which direction—in the form of which kind of action—the energy stored in the human organism is liberated. Something has happened which mechanism cannot explain. Nothing can explain it except the frank recognition of moral will as here directive of physical force.

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[1] There are no doubt expressions in Spinoza's writings which suggest a more personal conception of God. But the above represents, I think, his final mind as he quite clearly expresses it.

Moreover, here, in the region of moral choice, we are conscious of what Kant has called the categorical imperative of duty. This again has been argued already. The soul of man is conscious of a moral purpose above him claiming to control his action. The purpose of nature, or the God of nature, appears to be that he should be " good," as he can be only by the free choice of his will. We are thus bound to think of the great power, within the grasp of which we live and move and are, as not mere unconscious force, but also as conscious moral will and purpose—as willing righteousness. Here we feel ourselves planted on ground from which our reason cannot suffer us to be dislodged. Nature has behind it and within it a Being of whom the moral will in us and the moral personality is a better image than either mechanical force or unconscious life. Thus to think of God is not "anthropomorphism"—that is, the reducing of God into the image of man. It is more truly described as "theomorphism"—that is, the recognition that the human personality, which is the highest form of life known in nature, is a better "image of God" than physical forces or chemical combinations. Call God, if you will, superpersonal, but at any rate you must think of Him as not inferior to man—as at least rationally willing and choosing in accordance with a purpose of righteousness in the whole universe of things. This tentative conclusion, to which our reason pointed us, receives the strongest possible confirmation in the self-disclosure of God given through the prophets and Christ, which we have decided to accept as real.

Now, then, we have a conception of God which is in no way antagonistic to the "universal reign of law" in nature, but which gives it a new meaning. The very being of God is law and order. Nothing arbitrary or disorderly or disconnected in action can be conceived in connexion with Him. The "uniformity of nature" is the exhibition of His perfect orderliness.[1] But the principle of the order of nature is now seen to be not blind mechanism, but the perfect reason and perfectly free will of the supreme God the Creator.

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[1] It is only as the exhibition of God's will that the word "law" was first applied to nature: "Thou hast given it a *law* which shall not be broken"; and it is only in this sense that the use of the word is really legitimate. It always suggests something more than mere regularity. It suggests some authority behind the regularity.

This sort of conception of God no doubt received its most forceful expression within the race of Israel. The Jehovah of the Old Testament is, as we have seen, presented as most intensely personal, holy and free, the Creator and Governor of all that is. He is represented as having made man his vicegerent in the government of the world. Man is to "have dominion" over all the lower orders of creation. But on the vastest scale he has misused this stewardship, and his misuse of it has disordered not only his own nature and life, but the whole superficial order of the world. It has raised huge structures of insolence and cruelty and lust. And the blindness and wilfulness of sin have obliterated or monstrously perverted man's *thought* of God on the vastest scale. This is the burden of the Old Testament. And God has not seen fit to annihilate either man or his freedom. He tolerates the vast disorder. But He counterworks it. He enters into the struggle. He sets redemptive forces to work. He chooses His human instruments in the race of Israel, which are, if they will consent, to fulfil His special purpose. He bears with their obstinacy and wilfulness and ignorance. He perseveres. Through infinite difficulties and seeming failures He brings His redemptive purpose to its climax or critical moment. It is the coming of the Christ. And it is in this critical moment that God is specially—not then only, but then specially—represented as "baring His arm" in miraculous—that is, abnormal—action. And the point is: Is not the credibility of such action, at such a crisis, bound up with the belief in a God who is personal, rational, and free—in the world, but also beyond it and over it? The point of a divine miracle, as the Bible conceives it, is not to be a mere portent, but a sure indication to men's minds that the moral will of God is supreme in the world. It is just this sense that the wide and age-long prevalence of sin has dissolved. The very order of nature with its apparent moral indifference—God "making His sun to shine on the evil and on the good [indiscriminately], and sending rain upon the just and on the unjust"—has helped this moral blindness. The mind of mankind has utterly misconceived God. "Thou thoughtest wickedly that I am even such a one as thyself." Man's pride has left Him out of account, and despised Him. The rejection and crucifixion of Christ is, of course, the supreme example of such moral blindness. The "weakness of God" is there shown at its supreme point.[1] Is it not at least conceivable that at such a supreme crisis—and indeed at the like crises—God should have "bared His arm" and given mankind, or such portion of mankind as have "eyes to see," assurance—such assurance as is given by Christ's resurrection from the dead—that at the last issue the power which rules in the physical world is on the side of righteousness—that it is the same God as commands in conscience and speaks through prophets? It is true that the testing of faith lies in enduring and seeing Him who is invisible. This is the normal task of faith. But surely the Father of spirits may see that this testing ordeal must be tempered. Frequent miracles would destroy the reality of this probation, as they would destroy the sense of the divine order. But on the supreme occasions, can the human reason have the audacity to say they may not be necessary? Can it have the audacity to say that, on practically no evidence such as will leave to the will of man any responsibility for choice or faith, will it accept the fact of their occurrence? Certainly my reason cannot approach this point. Can I conceive that the reinforcement of the moral conscience, the sense of the supremacy of right, which we identify with Christianity, could have occurred without the resurrection? There is great reserve in the exhibition of the miraculous in the Bible, Old Testament and New; there is great limitation in the evidential function assigned to it. To this attention will be called. The Bible records are no encouragement to any childish love of the marvellous. But is it not to deny reason to God to deny the possibility or credibility of miracle? Is it not the very mark of rational power, as compared to blind force or animal instinct (which may be intelligence in a sense, but is petrified or dead), that, under exceptional circumstances, it is not tied to the uniformity of custom? It can act exceptionally under exceptional circumstances. What God is doing from this point of view when He works a miracle is not to violate the order of the world in the deeper sense. He innovates, it is true, upon the normal physical order, but solely in the interest of the deeper moral order and purpose of the world. Miracle is, from this point of view, God's protest against the monstrous disorder of sin. It is God the Creator recreating what man has defaced. At the last God is to come into His own—that is the day of the Lord. But He from time to time gives some foretastes of this final self-vindication, and they are "miracles." This is in effect Augustine's famous vindication of the miraculous.

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[1] Cf. Ps. lxxviii. 61: "He [God] delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the adversary's hand."

> "Not unreasonably we say that God does something contrary to nature which He does contrary to what we know in nature. For this is what we call nature—the customary course of nature as known to us, against which, when God does anything, they are called marvels or miracles. But as to that supreme law of nature, which is hidden from our knowledge either because we are impious or because we are still deficient in power to understand, God can no more act contrary to it than He can act contrary to Himself. . . ."[1]

And to admit the credibility or the actual occurrence of miracles in effect lays no fresh burden upon science. The sciences of physics and chemistry—and we may include biology—cannot account for all that is in nature. They cannot account for the action of free wills or for the consequent disorder of sin, any more than they can account for miracles. But neither the actions of free wills, nor the very rarely occurring miracles, hinder their effective investigation of nature on the level that lies below freedom. When a materialist philosophy has attempted to ignore freedom and still to take all human life into its province—as the old political economy attempted to deal with industrial life on the basis of a mechanistic philosophy of human motives—it has always conspicuously failed. Mechanism can give no account of miracles. But also it can give no account of freedom or sin—that is, of human nature.

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[1] This passage, which has been quoted in all modern treatises on the subject, beginning with Trench, is from *Con. Faust.* xxvi. 3, cf. also: "God, the maker of all natures, does nothing contrary to nature, for what is natural to anything is what He does, from whom is all the law and number and order of nature." When Lord Haldane (*Reign of Relativity*, p. 414) defines the miraculous as "what violates the principles of the order to which it belongs," he seems to be postulating in nature a complete separation of its "orders" which does not really exist. The intellectual demoralization which a too facile belief in miracles might occasion (see Pratt's *The Religious Consciousness*, pp. 27, 446) is not a temptation to which we are very liable to-day.

II

The above argument views miracles on the background of sin—as God's protest against the false imagination or moral blindness which sin begets in the minds of men. This is, on the whole, the Bible view of miracles. And, different as their basis in evidence is, it applies to the Old Testament miracles as well as those of the New. But there is another line of argument which applies only to the miracles of Jesus Christ, and it starts from the belief that in Christ we see something new to human experience—a new level reached in creation—such as it may be supposed would have occurred in any case, even if sin had never been. The argument runs thus: If Christ truly was, what His disciples came to believe Him to be, the eternal Word or Son of God, Himself very God, made man or "flesh," there was thereby constituted a new thing in nature, a new relation of the Creator Spirit, the Spirit of Life, to matter, a new level in the evolution of life, such as would naturally exhibit new phenomena. From this point of view "the works" of Christ are natural in His case—the natural outflowings of the power which He alone, or He first, possessed. It was "natural" that He, being what He was, should so heal the sick, should so control nature, should so be raised from the dead, as is related in the Gospels. In a phrase of Athanasius's, it is all "in rational sequence"—it is what would be expected in the case of such a person.

There are signs in the New Testament of this sort of conception of Christ's miracles as His natural "works," the natural expression of a hitherto unexampled nature. So the centurion, whose faith Jesus so strongly commended,[1] sees in Him one doubtless subordinate to God, but nevertheless, within God's world, holding so lofty a position that nature must obey His commands, even as in the world of the Roman Empire he himself, as centurion, though he was a man "under authority," the authority of his imperator, was yet able to command—to say to this man Go, and he goeth, and to that man Come, and he cometh. Such a command over the forces of nature he instinctively feels to belong to Christ. Miracles of control over nature are what he would expect in the case of such a person. So elsewhere in the Gospel there is attributed to Christ a certain kind of inherent "power" which, apparently like a natural force, faith in the sick can draw out to heal them, and only faith can draw out. When the woman with an issue of blood touched the garment of Jesus, He perceived that virtue or healing power—the "power that was in Him"—had gone forth.[2] And on another occasion, where faith was lacking, it is said that He could do no mighty works.[3] Such phrases suggest a "natural" faculty which could heal the sick and raise the dead—a "natural" outpouring of inherent life-giving power, which a certain lack of response could restrain or inhibit. So in the case of our Lord's own death, Peter, after he has recovered from his moral blindness, sees in the resurrection of Jesus nothing astonishing. As the prophet had foreseen, in the case of such an one, the very idea of the corruption of death was impossible to entertain—"it was not possible that he should be holden of death."[4]

In the face of the actual evolution of the universe.

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[1] Matt. viii. 9. [2] Mark v. 30. [3] Mark vi. 5.
[4] Acts ii. 24; cf. John x. 18.

such an argument is quite legitimate. For from the point of view of evolution it is untrue that the future must always resemble or has always resembled the past. Nature has not been in this sense uniform. We are bound to think of it as disclosing successive layers or stages, each successive layer or stage exhibiting laws or phenomena of its own, which from the point of view of the lower level would appear miraculous.[1]

Thus, however life emerged out of a merely mechanical universe, it emerged as a new thing with new laws. Plants growing and beasts moving are miraculous from the point of view of inanimate nature. Inanimate nature and its laws cannot explain these growths and motions. So human, rational beings, when first they builded and planted, however they emerged upon the world's surface, were doing a new thing, exhibiting a quite new power of moulding nature to their purposes. Their mastery of nature was miraculous from the point of view of merely animal life. A new level had been attained, and it exhibited new marks of activity. The future, in which they were the prominent feature, did not resemble the past. In the same way, when Christ came, in His person was a new relation of life and mind to matter, and He would naturally, as a "new creation," exhibit a new kind of control over nature.

It must be recognized that the old objection to miracles as urged by Spinoza, and still by Renan and his contemporaries, represented the dominance in the domain of science of the mathematical sciences. The norm of science was physical mechanism. Recently the normative influence of biology has become dominant. And biology demands new categories which physics and chemistry cannot supply. They cannot account for the behaviour of living things. Thus the argument is quite valid that—granted (what in fact we are not considering in this volume) that Christ cannot be reasonably accounted merely as man, but must be interpreted as God incarnate—He must be expected to exhibit actions natural to Him, which would be "miraculous" from the point of view of the nature which lies below Him.

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[1] Cf. Pringle Pattison, *Idea of God*, pp. 97, 104–5: "a new plane or level of existence, qualitatively different, and, through that difference, opening up a new range of possibilities"; "actual 'increments' or 'lifts' in the process, where quantity may be said to pass into quality, differences of degree into differences of kind." "Each new fact in turn must be sheerly unintelligible if we take our stand at the stage below." Cf. Haldane, *op. cit.*, pp. 125 ff.

Some apologists [1] for miracles have laid their main stress on this kind of argument. They have insisted that Christ's miracles are natural to His person. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that this separation of the miracles of Christ from all other miracles is not what the New Testament as a whole suggests. It seems to demand an explanation of the miracles of Christ which (apart from all question of evidence [2]) would assimilate them to those of the Old Testament as acts of God. In the Old Testament they are represented as acts of God wrought to show His purpose for Israel and to ensure that purpose. So in the New Testament the miracles done by Christ, or in His case, are represented as the acts of God who sent Him bearing witness to Him.[3] They are attributed to the Divine Spirit who indwelt Him,[4] and (often) are pictured as done by God in answer to the prayer of

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[1] Including myself in *Bampton Lectures*, lect. ii.

[2] See later, p. 248.

[3] E.g. Acts ii. 22, 24, x. 38, 40, xvii. 31. This is the constant mode of expression.

[4] Matt. xii. 28; Acts x. 38.

Jesus.[1] In a word, they are abnormal acts of God done to call attention to His Christ. So specially the resurrection is the act of God marking out and finally designating Jesus as His Son and as His authorized representative through whom He is to judge the world. That is to say, our thoughts are in the main directed by the miracles not to the special nature of Christ but to the nature of God as transcendent Creator, under whose hands nature is plastic and must fulfil all His will.

Thus we come back to the sole question which really occupies us in this chapter. There can be no doubt that one who holds the prophetic doctrine of God the Creator can find no *a priori* difficulty about the miracles of the Bible. They are not unworthy of God. They are not arbitrary acts. They are the exhibition from time to time of His special purpose in the world in connexion with Israel or with Christ, an exhibition given as it were in protest against the blindness of a sin-perverted world They are not perversions of the real order of the world, but acts done to wrench back a sin-perverted world into its proper order. They are part of a redemptive process which seeks the restoration of the divine order in nature, not its overthrow. Thus we come back at last to our original question—Is the invincible repugnance to entertaining the reality of miracles, bred in the mind by physical science, a legitimate repugnance? Is the practically prohibitive prejudice against miracles which it generates really rational? Or, in other words, is the scientific view of nature legitimately exclusive of any other view?

There can be no question—as has been already noticed—that any study exclusively pursued tends to narrow the mind. "No man having drunk old wine desireth new. He saith the old is good." No man having become through long years exclusively absorbed in the scientific conception of nature as the scene of invariable law can fail to resent the occurrence of miracles. But we contend science is not the only legitimate avenue to reality. The moralistic approach is at least as real. From that point of view the moral will of God and the fact of moral freedom in man and the vast portent of universal sin become the prominent facts, and the philosophy of divine redemption, and with it of miracles, becomes intelligible and acceptable.

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[1] Matt. xxvi. 53; John xi. 42.

The two points of view are practically not the least incompatible. Miracles, it must be remembered, are on all showing very rare occurrences. That is of their essence. They do not occur as a hindrance in the path of the scientific investigator. His postulated world of fixed laws is before him all the same, whether personally he believes in certain miracles or no. All that is asked of him as a scientific man is that he should recognize the abstraction of his sciences, and seek to impose no dogmatic or *a priori* barrier against the conception of the possibility or credibility of miracles—a possibility and credibility which are, as has been shown, really bound up with faith in the God of the prophets and of Jesus Christ.

III

But there are many—historians and students of history—who might read this sort of argument which we have been advancing and feel that it does not in any sense meet their case; but who at the same time would be unaffected by any exhibition of the strength of the historical evidence for (let us say) the corporal resurrection of Christ from the dead. What closes their minds *a priori* to evidence is not any abstract conception of nature, but what they would describe as a general deduction from history. "Religious history," they would say, "is full of reported miracles, some of them reported by eye-witnesses or on what appears to be very strong evidence. But we have ceased to believe them. We either regard them as the influence of certain powerful personalities upon other men's minds and bodies, which is a fact of nature such as is described under the general head of 'suggestion,' or of 'auto-suggestion,' which is akin to it. Or we believe that under certain conditions men's minds are so obsessed with the demand for miracle that they 'see' what they desire to see and their reports have no objective value. We notice that the more reasonable apologists for Bible miracles have given up the attempt to maintain almost all the nature-miracles of the Bible, i.e. those that defy any naturalistic interpretation—for the miracles of healing as recorded can be interpreted as not more than exaggerations of actual facts. No one now maintains that Balaam's ass really spoke or that the sun really 'stood still' at Joshua's behest. Nor is any claim put in for the ecclesiastical miracles. They only claim the real occurrence of the nature miracles of the New Testament or some of them, especially the miraculous birth and corporal resurrection of Jesus Christ. By this process of gradual withdrawal they show that they are fighting a losing battle. And the sooner they cease to fight it, the better in the interests of religion." [1]

But such an argument is full of misrepresentation. For my own part, though I am not disposed to think that the ass on which Balaam rode really uttered human words or that the poetry of the book of Jasher can assure us of a real alteration having taken place in the normal motions of the bodies of our solar system, yet I am not at all disposed to "give up" the claim for miracle in Old Testament history. The miracles of the Old Testament are mostly to be found either in connexion with the redemption of Israel from Egypt, and the foundation of their polity under Moses, or with the prophetic ministry of Elijah and Elisha. I think it is highly likely that these great moments in the history of redemption had really miraculous accompaniments. But the conditions of evidence make the vindication of this belief impossible. The written records of Exodus and Joshua cannot be proved to date within three centuries of the events recorded. The memory of them appears to have lived in popular songs. What exactly occurred cannot be defined. In the same way the written record of Elijah's and Elisha's activities appears to date from some 150 years after their lives. "They read like a transcript of a vivid oral tradition," which had lived in the schools of the prophets and in the mouths of the people for generations. Upon such a tradition no reliance can be placed in estimating what exactly occurred. As to the "ecclesiastical miracles," some of them rest upon very good evidence, and a few of them I should feel it was unreasonable scepticism to doubt. But it must be recognized that from the fourth century onwards, with increasing force, there was in the Christian Church such a demand for miracles in connexion with saints as appears to have led to their manufacture on the largest scale. Shortly[1] I shall have reason to cite in this sense the unimpeachable evidence of the great Bollandist—the Père Delehaye. Moreover, nothing in ecclesiastical history turns upon any particular miracle. And in arguing about any one of them you are arguing about supposed events which belong to a deeply discredited type. So it is reasonable, I think, that the argument concerning the real occurrence of miracles should be specially conducted upon the ground where their significance is obvious, where the discrediting atmosphere is, as will appear, absent on the whole, and where the evidence can be, as again will appear, very precisely estimated.

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[1] Such an argument I have seen proceeding from Dr. Sanday's pen, but unpublished.

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[1] See below, p. 261.

Further, I shall have occasion to demur to the idea that the miracles of healing in the New Testament admit of a naturalistic interpretation. They only admit of this if they are so reduced in magnitude as really to cease to be the events recorded. The untrustworthiness of the actual narrative as compared to what would result, if the necessary reduction is allowed, is so great that it can hardly be relied upon at all for any purpose.

Thus I entirely deny that the historians can plead their general distrust of miracles in religious history as an excuse for refusing to give serious consideration to a particular group of recorded miracles, which, I think it will appear, have no parallel elsewhere in the known history of the world in respect of the conditions under which they are recorded to have occurred. Again, all I ask of historians is the absence of the *a priori* dogmatic prejudice : granted this, let them exercise the freedom of criticism to the full.

IV

There is one not unimportant element of present-day thought which must be noted—that is, the widespread tendency among not unintelligent people to believe that miracles are even to-day of fairly frequent occurrence—such, I mean, as are reported from Lourdes, or are ascribed to spiritual healers or to the contemporary Christian Sadhu,[1] or are said to be worked under the influence of "Christian science," or, what may perhaps turn out to be very important, such as are recorded by spiritists—that is, the movements of furniture or other material objects, which apparently, if they are truly reported, must be ascribed to the action of beings—discarnate spirits—from another world.[2] If, as a distinguished man of science asserts,[3] a table in a modern drawing-room "made most caressing movements to and fro, and seemed as if it could not get close enough" to his wife, with motions expressive of affection, because moving at the will of his departed son, and expressing his feelings—then certainly our physical world is not a closed world, but is open to influences from the beyond which can materially affect its phenomena. The intrusion of unseen forces (the wills of spirits) can cause that to occur which "in the course of nature" could not have occurred at all. I imagine that if intelligent people in general come to believe such events really to occur, they will not be likely to disbelieve the miracles of the Gospel to have really occurred. I express no opinion, and indeed I am not qualified to express an opinion, on the reality of such occurrences. I confess an intense mental repugnance to the admission of their reality. But I seem to myself to be becoming more and more merely old-fashioned with regard to them. It seems to me quite likely that the next generation will find themselves in an intellectual world the attitude of which towards miracles will be not unlike the attitude of the Roman Empire, but quite unlike the attitude of the educated world of the last generation ; and by the attitude of the Roman Empire, I mean a disposition to accept such occurrences, without generally attributing very much importance to them.

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[1] *The Sadhu*, Streeter and Appasamy: cf. above, p. 36.

[2] These would come under the head of miracles or signs, as the words are used in the N.T. to describe events in nature due, not to the will and action of God or of Christ, but of other spirits (Mark xiii. 22; 2 Thess. ii. 9).

[3] Sir Oliver Lodge: see *Raymond*, pp. 216 and 263.

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However, enough has perhaps been said on the *a priori* credibility of miracles. My contention is threefold. *First*, that the evidence of the strictly miraculous in the New Testament is such that, as will appear, nothing can resist it but a predetermined mind possessed with the conviction that it is, if not impossible, yet incredible. *Secondly*, that it is neither impossible nor incredible, if the God of the prophets and of Jesus is the real God, if the world is what the Bible represents it as being, disturbed and distorted by the rebellion of free wills, and if the redemptive or recreative purpose of God needs such a manifestation of His power in the physical world to make it effective. *Thirdly*, that there is no ground for the assumption—the only assumption which can really arm our minds against the evidence—that the physical world which science investigates, the world of constant physical sequence and invariable law, is a self-complete and closed world, which can admit no influence from any other world. The evidence is against this theory of a self-complete enclosure, which cannot account for the action of human wills.

CHAPTER XI

THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

We have sought to set aside the *a priori* prejudice against miracles which, regarding them as impossible, or at least incredible, is bound to find some way of disposing of the historical evidence, however cogent. This *a priori* dogmatism, we have argued, both is in itself unjustifiable, as being based upon an untenable view of nature and natural laws, and also, in eliminating the large miraculous element from the Gospel narrative, leaves the whole residual picture presented by the Gospels incoherent, unconvincing, and so uncertain as to be capable of any kind of arbitrary interpretation. If our imaginations are purged of this prejudice and we approach the Gospels with open minds, we find ourselves presented in the Synoptists with a picture of Jesus of extraordinary impressiveness, such as we cannot conceive to have been an imaginative invention.

Let us consider, first of all, the Gospel of St. Mark. We have already taken note of its characteristics, and have seen reason to believe that in its main bulk it represents, as the subapostolic tradition tells us, the teaching of Peter written down, after repeated hearing, by the perfectly simple-minded disciple John Mark. It bears all the marks of the eye-witness's story. It is extraordinarily lifelike. Also it is full of miracles. Of these the most are miracles of healing which, as they are recorded, go quite beyond anything which admits of naturalistic interpretation.[1] But amongst them are "nature miracles"—the stilling of the storm and the feeding of the multitude with the few loaves and fishes.[2] This last, as we have already observed, is quite plainly an account of a miracle wrought to appease natural appetite; and to transform it into a quasi-sacramental communion, as Dr. Sanday would have us do, in which each participant received but a tiny fragment, does violence to the whole context.

We note again and again how the miracles give occasion for unmistakably genuine sayings or gestures of Christ, such as: "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins."[3] "Go thy way, show thyself to the priest . . . for a testimony unto them."[4] "Is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do harm? To save a life or to kill? . . . And he looked round about on them with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their hearts."[5] "How can Satan cast out Satan?"[6] "And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. . . . Why are ye fearful? Have ye not yet faith?"[7] "And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth, turned about. . . . Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."[8] "*Talitha cumi*"[9] (the actual Aramaic words given). "Give *ye* them to eat."[1] "Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid."[2] "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs."[3] "If thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth."[4] We note how lack of faith in the people limits the power of the Healer,[5] and how the blind man at Bethsaida is *gradually* healed.[6] In a word, the whole picture, full as it is of miracles, overwhelms us with the sense of reality.

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[1] See Dr. Reginald Ryle in *Hibbert Journal*, April 1907, "The Neurotic Theory of the Miracles of Healing."

[2] As has been explained, it is not at all unlikely that the "feeding of the four thousand" is really an account of the same incident as the "feeding of the five thousand"—an independent account, which St. Mark received from some other source than St. Peter, and mistook for a separate event. The two accounts differ in nothing except the figures.

[3] Mark ii. 10.

[4] Mark i. 44.

[5] Mark iii. 4–5.

[6] Mark iii. 23.

[7] Mark iv. 38–40.

[8] Mark v. 30–4.

[9] Mark v. 41.

Next let us turn to the material in the Synoptic Gospels which is common to St. Matthew and St. Luke, and not derived from St. Mark. This is generally supposed to represent the earliest of the written "Gospels," which is regarded as having consisted mainly, though not exclusively, of an account of our Lord's teaching, and is commonly designated as "the Source," or Q. About the nature and scope of such a document it is not possible to speak with any certainty, but at least there lies behind the First and Third Gospels a mass of common material which is probably the earliest record we have of Jesus, earlier than the Gospel of Mark. Though it seems to have been in the main a record of His teaching, yet the implications of miracle are both abundant and exceptionally convincing. First we should note the account of the Temptation of our Lord, which we cannot hesitate to ascribe to our

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[1] Mark vi. 37.

[2] Mark vi. 50.

[3] Mark vii. 27.

[4] Mark ix. 23. I may add that in one of the miracles recorded only by St. Luke—the healing of the ten lepers—we notice the same convincing association with the miracle of a self-evidencing saying: "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?" etc. (Luke xvii. 12–19). See also the characteristic action and speech of Peter given only by St. Luke in the story of the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke v. 8).

[5] Mark vi. 5.

[6] Mark viii. 22 ff.

Lord Himself. It is the account of a spiritual temptation given in material forms—a temptation, or series of temptations, strikingly unlike those of ordinary men, but profoundly suggestive of genuineness in connexion with the person of Jesus. The temptations are plainly those of a man starting on a great spiritual enterprise—the bringing in of the Kingdom of God—and fully conscious of extraordinary powers over nature. They have no meaning save for one who could, if He would, turn stones into bread, and amaze the people by alighting in the midst of them from the temple pinnacle. But He refuses to exercise His miraculous power for the satisfaction of His physical appetite or the astonishment of the people.[1] Then we have the healing of the centurion's servant,[2] where this observant Gentile recognizes in Jesus one—doubtless not supreme in nature, for He is under God—but holding in the economy of the world of nature a power like that which an officer holds in the Roman army over the men subject to him. He can surely command the services of nature with an unquestioned authority. And our Lord blesses the discerning faith of the Roman officer with the strongest commendation, and proves the truth of his discernment by exhibiting His power. Again, the habitual miraculousness of Christ's action is disclosed in His answer to the messengers of John the Baptist, who bring the question of his doubting spirit.[3] He bade them report to John the wonderful works which they had seen; "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up"; and the saying is noteworthy because among the wonderful works insisted upon is "the preaching the good tidings to the poor," and the insufficiency of miracles to generate faith is suggested by the warning, "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." Once more, we have the denunciation by Jesus of Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum for not giving heed to the powers He had wrought among them, which implies a great multitude of unrecorded miracles.[1]

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[1] Matt. iv. 1 ff.; Luke iv. 1 ff.

[2] Matt. viii. 5–10; Luke vii. 1–10.

[3] Matt. xi. 2 ff.; Luke vii. 18 ff.

Occasionally we seem to note a greater courage in St. Mark (or in St. Peter) in recording things exactly as they were, e.g. the limitation on the power of Jesus to heal where faith was lacking in those around Him—"He could do no mighty works, because of their unbelief"—which is not reproduced by St. Matthew or St. Luke. Again, in one passage of St. Matthew, where Jesus is represented, as in the other Synoptists, as transmitting to his disciples the power to work miracles of healing, we notice a heightening of the picture: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the leper, cast out devils. Freely ye have received, freely give"[2]; where Mark refers only to healing generally and mentions particularly the method of anointing.[3] But this heightening of the miraculous colouring is not discoverable generally or to any considerable extent. The picture is substantially identical in all the Synoptic Gospels. Owing indeed to the fewness of the discourses of Jesus recorded by Mark, the picture of the miraculous worker is in higher relief in his narrative than in any of the other Gospels. But in all of them the authority to work miracles and the spiritual authority to teach and to forgive are represented as inseparable the one from the other. Here is a real man, but a real man endowed with the authority of God morally and physically. This is the irresistible impression.

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[1] Matt. xi. 21 ff.; Luke x. 13 ff. On all these elements in Q, see Headlam, *The Miracles of the Gospels*, p. 182.

[2] Matt. x. 8.

[3] Mark vi. 13.

In all the Gospels we note the relatively subordinate evidential position assigned to the wonderful works of Jesus. He was no mere wonder-worker, though He worked wonders. This is made evident in the account of His temptation. He would not obtain belief by dazzling men. He knew the worthlessness of such belief. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded,"[1] in any really spiritual sense, by a supernatural occurrence. This appears to be the interpretation of our Lord's stern refusal to meet the demand of the scribes and Pharisees for a "sign" or a "sign from heaven."[2] This appears to mean some public demonstration of miraculous power on a great scale wrought to prove demonstratively His divine authority. And this He would not give. His miracles were incidental. They issued from a pity which knew that it had power to heal men's sicknesses and supply their physical needs, and could not refrain from using it; but they were rather concealed than advertised; or they were elements in the training of the disciples to trust Him utterly; or if occasionally they were intended to serve, like the healing of the paralytic man, as proofs to the eye of the spiritual authority which He claimed, they were still incidental or unpremeditated, and in presence of a relatively small company. It is difficult to state with any accuracy exactly what function our

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[1] Luke xvi. 31.

[2] Mark viii. 11; Matt. xvi. 1; cf. Matt. xii. 38–42, Luke xi. 16, 29 ff.; cf. also 1 Cor. i. 22, "The Jews ask for signs."

Lord seems to desire His miracles to fulfil, but at least it is quite clear that he absolutely refused to astonish men into belief, knowing that such a belief would be of no spiritual value. "There shall no sign be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonah"—that is, the sign of the word of righteousness.[1]

There was in the Roman Empire at this date a widespread curiosity for the mere "wonder" divorced from any moral associations. This is very well exemplified in the account which Tacitus[2] gives us of the public "miracles" of healing wrought by Vespasian at Alexandria upon a blind man and a man with a dislocated hand, which he records as evidences of divine favour towards the Emperor. At the instigation of the god Serapis—that is, doubtless, the priests in his temple—these men urgently demand to be respectively touched by the Emperor's spittle and trodden upon by his foot. Vespasian's first impulse is to treat the idea as ridiculous. Then his vanity contends with his fear of ridicule. He becomes more and more impressed with the opportunity, as the men are urgent and flatterers encourage him. He seeks medical advice. The doctors' answers are various, but they declare that the blind man's faculty of sight is not extinguished and could be recovered "if obstacles were removed," and that the maimed man's dislocated joints could be restored to their proper functions if health-giving force were applied. They encourage Vespasian to believe that he has been chosen by the gods for this divine ministry. They add that if he succeeds, it will be to the glory of Caesar, and, if he fails, that the ridicule will fall upon the two unfortunate men. So Vespasian, in a burst of confidence in his fortunes, with a joyful countenance makes the attempt, in presence of a multitude watching intently, and with immediate success. The one man got back the use of his hand, the other the sight of his eyes. And surviving witnesses still, Tacitus says, speak of the event, though by his day lying could bring them no advantage.

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[1] It is notable that the Greek word for "miracle" or "wonder" is never used in the Gospels, except for miracles of evil origin (Mark xiii. 22; Matt. xxiv. 24). "Powers" is the characteristic word in the Synoptists (cf. Mark vi. 5), and "signs" or "works" in St. John. These words carry moral and spiritual associations, as distinct from the mere marvel.

[2] *Hist.* iv. 81.

Now, whatever interpretation we put upon this narrative, we must recognize in it a very marked contrast to the spirit of the Gospel narratives—in the total absence of moral associations or conditions or results attached to the working of the miracles. That is the point insisted upon by Origen in his book against Celsus.[1] He does not seem to deny the occurrence of miracles in the pagan world, but he points to the fact that the miracles of the Gospels were wrought to make men morally better, and as part of a great divine act of moral redemption for mankind.

It is in accordance with this Christian tendency to value miracles only as instruments of moral instruction that, among the miracles of Jesus and his disciples, those which made most impression—apart from the central and all-important miracle of the resurrection—were the castings-out of evil spirits of which we get such graphic descriptions in the Gospels. They were found specially impressive because the greater part of the world lived in a terror of evil spirits, which was paralysing and degrading, and these acts of redemption manifested the power of Jesus to emancipate men from the slavery of this terror and enable them to lift up their heads as free men, sons of an Almighty Father.

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[1] See Origen, *c. Celsum*, iii. 28, 29.

Of the mere desire for the marvellous or the fear of it, we have examples in the Gospels in the desire of Herod Antipas to "see Jesus, for he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him"; and in his earlier belief (if it was serious) that Jesus was John the Baptist risen again. Perhaps there are passages in the Acts which seem to suggest in the earliest Church a demand for miracles not unlike that of the mediaeval Church.[1] But this is not the temper of the disciples in the Gospels. They accept miracles readily enough. They create no difficulty in the mind of any New Testament writer. But there is no such demand for them as would imagine them and ascribe reality to the imagination. A sign of this is the fact that no miracles were ascribed to one who came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" and whom all reverenced as a great prophet—"John did no miracle."[2] In fact, the disciples appear in the Synoptic Gospels as very unimaginative men, and the miracle-hunger is not in them. Indeed, for the first three centuries of Christianity there was comparatively little stress laid upon miracles as "evidences," except on the great crucial miracle of the resurrection; and though there is occasional mention of contemporary miracles,[3] yet Chrysostom speaks plainly of "signs" or miracles as no longer occurring, and explains that they were needed as guarantees of the divine intention when the new religion or manner of life had to be first established among men, but are not needed now.[1] Similar language occurs in other early writers.

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[1] Acts v. 15, xix. 11 ff.

[2] John x. 41.

[3] See Origen on the "traces" of the old power still found in the Church, *c. Cels.* i. 2, iii. 24. Irenaeus uses more unequivocal language.

No doubt, from the fourth century onward, the temper begins to prevail which found it necessary to attach miracles to saints, in the same way as later painters attached a halo to the saint's head. This temper has been admirably and courageously described in its monotonous consequences by the Dean of the Jesuit company of Bollandists, who have produced and are producing the gigantic work of the *Acta Sanctorum*. No one interested in mediaeval credulity should fail to read Fr. Delehaye's *Légendes Hagiographiques*.[2] It is the almost universal prevalence of this temper in the mediaeval Churches which makes one justly sceptical about the records of miracles, even when they appear to rest on very good evidence, though it is very far from justifying universal disbelief.[3]

There are, in fact, two opposite tempers in men which are destructive of the kind of appeal which the Gospel miracles make to reasonable men. One is the temper of pure credulity, which demands miracles and invents them in accordance with its desire. The other is the temper of *a priori* disbelief, which is bred of the modern spirit of physical science, when it is misapplied, demanding for events claimed to be historical the sort of demonstration which history does not often supply. If there is anything certain, it is certain that Jesus Christ did not intend to *compel* men to believe in Him. Certainly, for instance, He did not "prove" His resurrection from the dead except to those who had already faith in Him, though a faith which had suffered eclipse. It would have been wholly contrary to His principles of action to have confuted His adversaries by physical demonstrations.

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[1] See *Hom. in Matt.* xiv. 3, *Hom in Epist. ad Col.* viii. 5. *In Ep.* i. *ad Cor.* vi. 2, "Do not make the fact that signs do not occur now an argument that they did not occur then [in New Testament times]. They were useful then, but not now."

[2] Brussels, 1905; English trans. (Longmans), *Legends of the Saints: an Introduction to Hagiography.*

[3] Thus when we read (Sulpicius Severus, *Dial.* iii. 13) of St. Martin's anguish of conscience over his consent to communicate with those who had promoted the execution of Priscillian for heresy, and learn how he knew himself weakened through this sin, if it was a sin, in his power of healing the sick, we feel sure that Martin believed himself to have, as his contemporaries undoubtedly believed him to have, such power. Some mediaeval miracles rest on evidence that seems to be conclusive.

Now we will turn our attention away from the "powers" wrought by Jesus or His disciples which it is so difficult to disbelieve, to the "powers" unhesitatingly believed by the first Christians to have been wrought by God upon Him or in His case—notably His resurrection the third day from the dead, His ascension, and His birth of a virgin mother.[1] With regard to these three miracles it will be necessary to go into detail.

I. The Resurrection

The denial of the real occurrence of the corporal resurrection of Jesus is surely, from the point of view of historical criticism, a desperate paradox. The Gospels show us the disciples after the death of Jesus as a dispirited band of men, who had been gradually disheartened by the seeming failure of Jesus, and finally utterly discouraged by His rejection and execution. "We hoped that it was he which should redeem Israel"[1] describes their state of mind. It plainly appears that this sense of disappointment and failure so possessed them and dominated them that they could hardly be aroused from their lethargy. Then the early chapters of the Acts present to us this same body of men confident and courageous—with a courage which no hostility could shake. They had plainly been suddenly driven round a sharp corner by the sort of impact which only some strong external force can exercise. And though they were not emotional men, but prosaic and slow of spiritual apprehension, and men, it would appear, liable to jealousies and misunderstandings among themselves, they had been transformed all together. It was a corporate transformation, which again suggests the impact of some startling fact of common experience. And to such a fact they manifestly appeal. Their outlook has been changed by the grave of Jesus having been found empty on "the third day" after His crucifixion and burial, and afterwards by repeated appearances of the risen Jesus to individuals among them and to the assembled group, by which their doubts had been at last wholly dispelled, and a new and glorious conviction of the divinely certificated lordship of Jesus had come to possess them all in common.

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[1] This distinction, however, between the miracles of Jesus and those wrought by God in His case must not be pressed too far. The miracles wrought by Jesus are in the New Testament commonly regarded as acts of God wrought through Him by the power of God's Spirit given to Him (see above, p. 244); and, on the other hand, in John x. 18 (perhaps only there) Jesus speaks of Himself as rising by His own inherent authority, though that authority comes from the Father.

The fact of the empty tomb seems to me as indisputable as any fact of history. If we find it now impossible to suggest a deliberate fraud on the part of the apostles[2]—and such a suggestion is negatived alike by their character and by the state of despondency and hopelessness in which they were—there is no plausible explanation of the empty tomb. As to their experiences of the risen Christ, our earliest written witness is that of St. Paul, which we must examine.

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[1] Luke xxiv. 21.

[2] I suppose the currency among the Jews of the report of such fraudulent action on their part must be assumed to account for Matt. xxviii. 13, 15. "His disciples came by night and stole him

But we must remark that there can be no reasonable doubt that what the apostles understood on the evidence of the empty tomb and the appearances was a *corporal* resurrection—viz. that the body of Jesus had been rescued from corruption and raised to a new kind of life. Peter and Paul in the Acts are alike represented as expressing the conviction that "he saw no corruption."[1] Now we turn to St. Paul's witness.

He wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians probably in the spring of A.D. 55. A doubt among the Corinthian Christians, not about the resurrection of Jesus, but about the destiny of those of their number who had passed away since they believed, leads St. Paul to repeat with much precision what he had taught them on his first visit to them in A.D. 50 or 51. But what he then taught them was nothing of his own. It was the common matter of the apostolic testimony ("Therefore whether it be I or they [the other apostles], so we preach and so ye believed"[2])—it was what he had "received" when he first became a Christian—probably in precise form at his first return to Jerusalem to "visit Cephas," that is Peter, three years after his conversion, which had occurred probably about A.D. 35. What he had since taught his converts was, as we see, a sort of formulated record

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away. . . . This saying was spread abroad among the Jews until this day." But we cannot feel complete confidence in the story of the military guard.

[1] Acts ii. 31, xiii. 37.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 11.

of the death, burial, resurrection and appearances of Christ, to which he adds the personal record of what he had himself seen on his conversion.

"Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received. . . . I make known, I say, in what words [1] I preached it unto you. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as unto one born out of due time [an abortion], he appeared to me also."

This enumeration squares very well with the appearances recorded in the Gospels, save that it is a record of appearances to the "chosen witnesses" and omits the appearances to the disciples on the way to Emmaus and, notably, those to the women. This is very natural in a formal record drawn up by Jews. Also no note is taken of some appearances recorded in the Fourth Gospel only. This again is not surprising. The object of the Fourth Gospel was largely to supply real (or as some would say, imagined) incidents which the common traditions had left unnoticed. Granted these omissions, the summary record in St. Paul squares well with the records or intimations in the Gospels and Acts. There the appearance to Peter alone is mentioned as occurring first,[2] followed by the appearance to the twelve.[1] The appearance to the five hundred is necessarily an appearance in Galilee, where alone there were so many persons who in some sense could be called disciples, and it can be identified with the appearance recorded in St. Matthew.[2] The appearance to James is suggested by the position which James is found occupying in the primitive community in the record of Acts. The later appearance to all the Apostles is naturally identified with that specified in Acts i. 4, where the summary which concludes the author's earlier book, the Gospel of Luke, is developed in more explicit form. All this is very satisfying if the documents are treated naturally as historical documents.

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[1] Or "with what purpose," "in what sense"; cf. Acts x. 29.

[2] Luke xxiv. 34.

The attempts to evade the evidence of St. Paul appear to me extraordinarily forced. Thus (1) St. Paul's assertion that Christ both died and was raised the third day "according to the Scriptures" is supposed to carry with it the suspicion that the belief in the resurrection the third day was due to the felt necessity for interpreting Scripture prophecy. But this is most improbable. There is no prophecy which compelled any such belief. The particular text of Hosea suggested ("After three days he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight") has no natural reference to Christ and cannot be shown to have carried any influence. It is most true, as our Lord is recorded to have insisted, that there are passages in the Old Testament which present us with a suffering servant of Jehovah who fails and dies and yet is divinely vindicated, passages which suggest the idea of a vindication of the Christ through or in spite of failure and death. But there was nothing, except the occurrences recorded in the Gospels, to account for the definite assertion "The third day he was raised from the dead."

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[1] Luke xxiv. 36 ff

[2] Matt. xxviii. 16 ff.

Nor, again, (2) is there any plausibility in the constantly made suggestion that as St. Paul's own experience on the road to Damascus was a vision of Christ in glory, and as from heaven, so presumably he imagined the earlier visions of the apostolic company, not at all as they are recorded in the Gospels. On the contrary, St. Paul treats his own appearance as abnormal in time—he uses the rather startling expression "an abortion"—and there is not the slightest reason to suppose that he thought of the earlier appearances as given under the same conditions.

(3) Nor, again, is there any plausibility in the suggestion that inasmuch as St. Paul contemplates a resurrection of the departed members of the Church, which is consistent with their having suffered dissolution of their physical bodies, and declares that "flesh and blood [i.e. humanity under the physical conditions of the present] shall not inherit the kingdom of God," so we may suppose that he can have laid no stress upon the resurrection of Christ's *body*, but only upon His appearance in another "spiritual" body. If we read the whole passage we see that St. Paul has in mind three different kinds of resurrection: (i) the resurrection of Christ on the third day after His death and burial; (ii) the resurrection of the since departed Christians, whose bodies had been presumably subject to the natural process of dissolution, but who were to receive at the final coming of the Christ in glory spiritual bodies, which would be both different from the bodies which had seen corruption and yet in physical continuity with them, in the way suggested by the grains sowed in the ground and rotting there, but yet living again in the ears

which spring from their dissolution; and (iii) the sudden transformation of those who shall be actually alive at the second coming, who "in a moment," "in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump," shall be transformed from the state of present-day physical life to the condition of the spiritual and glorified bodies wherewith they shall be associated with those who were dead and are now raised and with Christ. In all these three classes of cases St. Paul conceives a transformation more or less gradual or sudden of the natural body into the spiritual—"we shall all be changed"—and quite plainly he finds the norm or pattern in the resurrection of Christ, in whose case he plainly conceives in the simplest manner that in respect of that body in which He died and *was buried*—in respect of that same body He was raised.

As to the condition of Christ's resurrection body, he says nothing. We can only presume that he modelled his conception of the resurrection body of those who are in Christ upon what he believed about Christ the first-fruits. On this hypothesis he would have conceived of Christ's resurrection body as what he calls spiritual; and I think that the ideas suggested in the Gospels agree very well with this conception. The risen Christ is represented as having passed out of the grave clothes, leaving them to collapse,[1] and as having left the tomb empty before the stone was rolled away.[2] Henceforth He is not represented as living here or there—in Jerusalem or in Galilee, at this house or that, or moving hither or thither on foot. He is translated apparently into a higher sphere of being, out of which he manifests himself in one form or another as suits His spiritual purpose, appearing in a room "when the doors were shut" as one who no longer felt physical obstacles, but who could still submit, if His purpose so demanded, to physical conditions; as showing His wounded side and hands, and even eating and drinking with His disciples. His condition is one of which hitherto men had never had experience. His spiritual body was material indeed, but it was one in which matter was wholly subservient to spiritual purpose, and no longer in any way an impediment or a restraint. To me it appears incredible that the evangelists could have derived from any other source than the actual experiences of the first disciples the subtle details which suggest the complex picture of the "spiritual body" of Jesus after the resurrection.

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[1] John xx. 6, 7; cf. Latham's *Risen Master* (Cambridge Press, 1901), p. 29.

[2] Mark xvi. 6.

My contention is, then, that we must accept St. Paul's record in the only sense that it legitimately bears, and read in the light of it the fragmentary records of the evangelists. The apostles had a serious sense of what it meant to be witnesses before the world of a fact of quite transcendent and crucial importance. They drew up their record in such a form as that in which St. Paul gives it as the unanimous witness of the apostles. Then the evangelists, according to their special purposes in writing and their special sources of information, give us particular stories of this or that appearance which can be woven into a continuous and harmonious narrative, as is successfully done by Dr. Swete,[1] but with regard to which I do not feel the least anxiety to deny discrepancies of detail, such as occur always in the unstudied narratives of first-hand witnesses. Certainly the evangelist St. Luke had no very rigid conception of the accuracy required of a faithful recorder, as we see if we compare the three accounts he gives us of St. Paul's conversion—one by himself and the two others in reported speeches of St. Paul, which differ in details ; or, again, if we compare his earlier account of our Lord's dealings with His disciples after the resurrection, given in his Gospel, where all appears as one single interview, with the account by the same author at the beginning of the Acts, where the sequence of events is made much more explicit and clear. This unconstrained naturalness of narrative is more convincing than scrupulous accuracy.

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[1] *Appearances of our Lord after His Passion* (Macmillan).

There is only one serious apparent discrepancy in the Synoptic narratives of the manifestations of Jesus to His disciples after the resurrection. In St. Mark and St. Matthew our Lord is represented as telling His disciples on the eve of His passion that after He is raised up He will go before them into Galilee.[1] And accordingly the message sent to them after the resurrection through the women is that He is going before them into Galilee, and that there they shall see Him, as He said to them[2]; and in St. Matthew the only recorded appearance is in Galilee.[3] But the appearances recorded by St. Luke are all at Jerusalem, and there is nothing to suggest any injunction to go into Galilee or any appearance there. This apparent discrepancy disappears, however, if we suppose that our Lord intended His disciples, as St. Mark tells us, to go at once into Galilee, but that delay occurred owing to their unbelief and slowness of heart.[1] They needed to be reassured and convinced in Jerusalem, and, according to the Fourth Gospel, it was eight days before this conviction was gained by all of them.[2] This accounts for the earlier manifestations in Jerusalem. St. Luke had special information about these which he gives us, and does not seem to have understood the original intention of Jesus or its tardy fulfilment. If this was so, we understand the relation of the two sets of appearances, both of which, as we have seen, are implied in St. Paul's earlier summary. Then after the appearance recorded by St. Matthew they must have returned to Jerusalem and received the injunction to tarry there till they were endued with power from on high.[3] The forty days specified by St. Luke [4] gives time for this sequence of events.

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[1] Mark xiv. 28; Matt. xxvi. 32.

[2] Mark xvi. 7; Matt. xxviii. 7.

[3] As is well known, the conclusion of St. Mark's Gospel, as we are familiar with it (xvi. 9–20), appears to be a later addition by one familiar with the First, Third, and Fourth Gospels. It is only conjecture that St. Matthew follows the course of St. Mark as it originally stood.

My contention is, then, that the historical evidence for the resurrection of our Lord the third day from the dead and His subsequent manifestations of Himself to His apostles is in the highest degree cogent. Nothing can resist it, except the sort of treatment of the narratives which can render insecure almost any historical evidence. No doubt what makes it convincing is the sense that this act of God in vindication of His Christ is no mere portent, but something which our reason needs and welcomes. The Bible records a long-drawn-out process of divine redemption culminating in Jesus Christ. His rejection and execution upon the Cross would, taken by itself, have laid upon human faith an impossible strain. There is no reason to believe that anything at all resembling what the Acts records could have happened except on the basis of a conviction which the resurrection alone could have generated in the minds of the disciples. What they needed and received in His corporal resurrection was the assurance that the power of God—the Creator and ruler of the whole world, material and moral—was, in spite of the seeming failure of the Cross, on the side of Jesus. In this supreme crisis nothing could reassure them but such an evidence of divine purpose undefeated—such a foretaste of the day of the Lord, the day when God is to come into His own. And still for us to-day the ultimate trial of faith lies in the seeming weakness of good in the conflict with evil. It is supremely hard to believe that the whole power of the universe really and ultimately serves a moral purpose. It is only a corporal miracle such as the resurrection of Jesus which gives us the needed reassurance that there is only one sovereignty in the universe, the sovereignty of the righteous God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that in the full meaning of the term "Jesus is Lord."

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[1] Luke xxiv. 11, 25.

[2] Even when they reached Galilee, the narrative of St. John xxi. 1-14 would suggest that they were still bewildered and did not fully understand their mission.

[3] Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 4.

[4] Acts i. 3.

II. The Ascension of Christ

The New Testament as a whole is full of the conviction that Christ who was crucified was not only raised from the dead, but also by the right hand of God exalted to the seat of supreme sovereignty in the heavens.[1] His "session at the right hand of God" is, as has always been recognized, a symbolical statement, for, on all showing, God has no right hand. But the language used implies that the assumption into glory was an historical event, something that happened at a particular date, and St. Luke gives us the story of what occurred at the beginning of the Acts. This story of the ascension, as it presented itself to the apostles' eyes, involved no fresh miracle. It was simply the last of a series of "manifestations," all of which postulate in the risen body of Christ superiority to the conditions of material bodies as we know them. This has been pointed out. All the appearances were, it seems, condescensions to conditions of space and material life to which the risen Christ was no longer subject. Each was a purposive "manifestation." The last, the ascension, as St. Luke records it, was of the same kind. It taught the lesson of Christ's exaltation under the material symbol of a physical rising. Very likely those whose minds were first impressed by this ascension believed, as we no longer believe, that there is a place called heaven above our heads, and that the path of the ascending Jesus was the way thither. But still to-day, with our superior knowledge of the cosmic system, there is no other symbolic action which can be imagined which could convey the desired impression. Nor can we imagine how, without some such impressive occurrence, bringing the appearances of Christ to a decisive end, the disciples could have reached the state of mind in which we find them in the opening of the Acts, in which they are wholly without expectation of any more "manifestations" of Christ and wholly set on what is promised them—spiritual equipment for a task of unknown magnitude.[1]

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[1] See Acts ii. 33–4; Rom. viii. 34; Eph. iv. 9, 10; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Heb. i. 3, iv. 14, etc.; 1 Pet. iii. 22; John vi. 62.

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[1] Heavenly spirits appear as messengers both to convey the first information of Christ's resurrection and on the occasion of the ascension, appearing apparently as men, not with wings. If such spirits exist normally unseen, I do not see why their occasional materialization should be incredible.

III. The Virgin Birth of Jesus

A flood of controversy—both by way of attack and rejoinder—has been poured over this question within the last fifty years, and it has a bewildering effect upon a student. But it seems to me that certain points emerge sufficiently clearly, which I will endeavour to point out.[1]

1. Great stress was laid at the beginning of the apostolic mission upon personal witness. The personal witness of the apostles had extended " from the baptism of John unto the day that he [Jesus] was received up from us," and their preaching about Jesus did not accordingly go farther back than the beginning of the Lord's public ministry ; and it was solely on the ground of this witness, and especially on the ground of the resurrection, that faith in Jesus was demanded. Consequently nothing concerning His birth—except His descent from David, which was apparently undisputed,[2] and that He belonged to the family of Joseph the carpenter of Nazareth, who apparently died before the public ministry began, and of Mary, who certainly survived into the early days of the Church—entered into the first preaching of the gospel or the first knowledge of the Church. Certainly nothing concerning the birth of Christ was part of that assurance on the basis of which faith in Jesus was claimed. I may add that it ought not to this day to form part of the basis of the claim. This limitation of the apostolic witness accounts for the silence of St.

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[1] Accurate and full information will be found in Dr. Box's *Virgin Birth of Christ* (Pitman, 1916), and I may refer to my *Dissertations* (John Murray), Diss. i.

[2] Mark x. 47 ; Rom. i. 3 ; Heb. vii. 14.

Mark,[1] who gives us in the main the cycle of Peter's preaching, and the silence of St. Paul. If, however, Luke was Paul's companion, and had gathered the materials of his Gospel before Paul's first captivity was over, he must surely have known all that Luke knew and therefore the secret of the virgin birth. He may very well have known it earlier. His faith in the radical sinlessness of Christ—sinlessness, I mean, not in fact only but in principle, inasmuch as Christ was the new man, the sinless source of the new manhood—would have made the idea very agreeable to him. But in any case, that he does not mention it seems to me nothing more strange than that he does not mention other crucial events of our Lord's life, as the bestowal of the Holy Spirit at His baptism, or His transfiguration. This limitation of the apostolic preaching accounts also for there being no narrative of the birth in St. John's Gospel, which is essentially a record of personal experience, but in fact St. John's Gospel, written at the end of the first century, shows evident signs that the writer knew and believed the virgin birth.[2]

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[1] We note, however, that St. Mark does not use the phrase "the carpenter's son": see Mark vi. 3, compared to Matt. xiii. 55. It is possible that the latter phrase represents the original tradition. Phrases attributing paternity to Joseph recur in the other Evangelists, where their meaning is guarded by the opening narratives.

[2] There is a reading of John i. 13 witnessed to by a number of fathers beginning from the second century—"*who was born* not of bloods [i.e. not of the mixture of human seeds] nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man [a husband], but of God"—which directly describes our Lord's birth of a virgin, and not a few moderns, like Dean Inge, find it convincing. For myself, I am disposed to prefer the reading of the MSS. But I have no doubt that this common reading clearly presupposes the fact of the virgin birth. See my *St. John's Epistles*, p. 139. Also I think Dr. Chase (*Belief and Creed*, Macmillan, p. 67 ff.) has made quite evident that St. John's irony is apparent in vii. 42, and that the fact that Jesus was born at Bethlehem is in his mind. Also I think Rev. xii. 4 has the narrative of Matthew ii. 13 behind it.

2. But when the first disciples had settled down to their faith in Jesus, on the basis of His resurrection and His life and teaching and the mission of His Spirit, they must have enquired about His birth and early years and must have wanted to know everything that could be known—all the more that even during our Lord's ministry it would appear as if scandal about His birth was not unknown. This appears to be suggested in the taunt of the Jews.[1] Anyway, they must have wanted to know. It may very well have been that during Mary's life nothing was said in public. But Joseph must have taken steps before his death to guard Mary's reputation, and Mary could not have failed to leave her experience on record. So we look at the two accounts we have got. The effect is somewhat overwhelming. The account in Matthew is wholly from the side of Joseph—his perplexities—the divine guidance vouchsafed to him in dreams—how he became the guardian of the new-born child through strange perils—the further guidance which brought him back from Egypt[2] and to Nazareth. This early narrative of Matthew exhibits the author's zeal to find fulfilments of prophecy, but it very strongly suggests a statement by Joseph underlying it. On the other hand, the narrative in Luke i. and ii.—so plainly a woman's story—if it is true, must be Mary's story.

3. Now let us take Luke's narrative apart.[3] He claims in his preface accurate knowledge of the course of all things from the first, and then promptly begins with the narrative of the birth. Luke is a very honest man and good historian. (The historical statement of

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[1] John viii. 41.

[2] That Jesus was taken to Egypt was the basis of a Jewish or heathen accusation that He had learned sorcery there: see Box, *The Virgin Birth of Christ* (Pitman), p. 205.

[3] See Additional Note, p. 282.

Luke ii. 1–2, so long supposed by its falsity to discredit these early chapters, is now no longer regarded as false, but is found erected into a " proof text " in learned works about the Roman method of provincial administration.[1]) It is obvious that when you pass from Luke's preface to his narrative you pass from very good literary Greek to a Greek which is Greek only in the words used. The spirit and method is quite Aramaic. St. Luke, then, is quoting an Aramaic document or story. It is a woman's narrative. It is intensely intimate. It is primeval—that is to say, it suggests, if read attentively, no idea of an Incarnation, only of the coming of the promised Christ,[2] and, though it gives a hint of a searching crisis and anxious trials to come,[3] it could not have had its origin after His rejection by the Jews. The new-born Child is to be the promised son of David to restore the position of His house. He is to " have the throne of his father David," and to "reign over the house of Jacob for ever."[4]

We may take it for certain that (to quote Harnack's words) " the conjecture . . . that the idea of a birth from a virgin is a heathen myth, which was received by Christians, contradicts the entire earliest developments of Christian tradition." The early chapters both of Matthew and Luke are profoundly and thoroughly Jewish : Jewish anticipation never included a birth from a virgin mother for the Messiah ; and the whole atmosphere of pagan legend was alien from the home of these narratives.[5]

[1] See above, p. 197.

[2] See my *Dissertation*, pp. 17–18.

[3] Luke ii. 34–5.

[4] Luke i. 32–3.

[5] See Box, chap. viii and my *Dissertation*, pp. 55 ff. ; also Harnack, *History of Dogma* (E. T.), vol. i. 100 n., and *Luke the Physician*, pp. 102 ff.

I do not see why appearances of angelic spirits should be put aside as obviously false.[1] But I am not concerned to deny *any* influence of pious imagination upon the story—only that it rests upon a real experience of Mary, as to which she could not be mistaken, viz. that Jesus was not begotten of a human father, though He was truly conceived in her womb and nourished and born in normal fashion.

4. When we take St. Matthew's narrative we have to deal with a Gospel the history of which is obscure. It is almost certain, I think, that it rests upon the work of Matthew the apostle and the Gospel of Mark, but whether the first two chapters were contained wholly or partly in Matthew's Aramaic work, or come from the unknown Jewish editor of the book as we have it, we cannot tell. Plainly the author, whoever he was, is deeply interested to find fulfilment of prophecy, but whatever is thought about some of these suggested fulfilments, it is improbable that the "prophecies" brought forward in evidence in these chapters suggested the "events" to the imagination of the writer. The two last are notoriously difficult to treat as prophecies. The prophecy from Micah might have suggested, and did suggest, Bethlehem as the place of Christ's birth, but in the light of recent vindication of St. Luke's statements, the fact that Jesus was born there cannot reasonably be impugned. There remains the Greek version of Isaiah's prophecy, "The virgin shall be with child," of which it must be said that it had not suggested to the Jews the idea that the Messiah was destined to be born of one still a virgin. It would appear as if it was only after the Christians had come to believe the facts as recorded by St. Luke that they discovered this proof text in

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[1] See above, p. 273.

the Greek Bible. The strongest grounds for believing in its actual occurrence are the evidence of St. Luke, and the striking indications afforded by the narrative of St. Matthew that it has underlying it the experiences of Joseph.

5. If we take the two narratives together, we find them utterly independent, and the author of each one appears to be ignorant of the narrative of the other. They are not strictly discrepant, but independent. The events of each can be fitted into those of the other, but Luke plainly does not know of the event of St. Matthew ii., nor Matthew apparently of the previous residence at Nazareth. But this independence of course emphasizes their point of agreement, viz. that Jesus was born at Bethlehem of a virgin mother.

6. That two discrepant genealogies should have been admitted into the Gospels (which was felt as a grave difficulty from the earliest times) is an amazingly clear sign that the Church was not at all given to manipulate documents in order to produce harmony. I think we may be quite content here, without seeking explanations of the discrepancy, to recognize that the Jewish families of pure descent were given to constructing genealogies; that these genealogies would have affiliated Jesus to His "father" in whatever sense he was His father; and that all we are concerned to ask is that these two genealogies should be taken to represent two independent attempts to construct a genealogy for Jesus.[1]

7. Criticism of the destructive kind has for long years fastened on these early chapters of Matthew and Luke as upon the weakest point in the citadel of the Creeds. I think that those who believe that the

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[1] See Box, pp. 12 ff. and 38 ff., and *Dissertations*, p. 38.

historical citadel can be maintained should insist that the question of the birth is secondary and not primary, viz. that the question of faith in Jesus must rest still, where it was made to rest from the beginning, on the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus. On these, quite apart from any questions concerning His birth, the faith stood and still could stand. Nevertheless, when that standing-ground has been gained, and the question of the birth, blackened as it has been with controversy, is approached, the honest student must not confuse the raising of every conceivable objection to the stories with evidence that they are really insecure. Many of the objections have been fundamentally refuted. In result I claim that the fair student cannot resist the conviction that Luke's story shows every sign of coming from a trustworthy source—one of the only two trustworthy sources—and Matthew's narrative from the other; and their agreement is emphasized by their exceedingly obvious independence. He must also admit that in these two narratives there is no later dogmatic motive at work. The idea of Christ is simply the Jewish idea of the Messiah. Nevertheless, when the story of the birth of Jesus became known—I suppose before the destruction of Jerusalem—it was eagerly welcomed, no doubt because of its harmony with the belief about Christ's person as more than human. The fact of the virgin birth became at once, it would appear, by the beginning of the second century, an element of the creed of the Church, now being formulated.[1] This was in part no doubt because of its felt congruity both with the idea of the divine incarnation and with the idea of Christ as the sinless source of the new humanity, the second Adam. Already I think in St. John i. 13 the connexion of the virgin birth with the sinless source of the regenerated life is apparent. For myself, I confess I feel this connexion to be most intimate. I think we are generally right to resent any attempt to base upon supposed logical necessity the claim that such and such an event did actually happen. We doubt the power of man's reason to say how things must have happened.[1] Thus we may be thankful that it is demonstrable that neither the idea of the incarnation, nor that of the second Adam, lies behind the narratives of the birth in Matthew and Luke. Moreover, the course of our argument has not yet taken us to the point where the doctrine of Christ's person comes in question, nor the doctrine of original or racial sin. Nevertheless, I must confess that I cannot imagine how the birth of the really sinless man could have occurred without some physical miracle, so sure do I feel that sin has somehow affected the physical stock; and I once drew from Huxley the admission that if he believed—what he did not—that Jesus was strictly sinless, he would suppose that that involved as well a physical as a moral miracle. Nor can I conceive how the birth in the flesh of the divine person of the Son could have been mediated by purely natural means. But these are questions which we are not yet in a position to entertain.

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[1] See *Dissertations*, p. 41. The evidence of *The Odes of Solomon* should now be added.

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[1] Historical Christianity owes a deep debt of ingratitude to the Roman Church for having allowed the sense of what would be fitting in the case of the Blessed Virgin to become the basis for affirming, with different degrees of dogmatic assurance, as two facts of history, the immaculate conception and the corporal assumption into heaven of the Blessed Virgin, for which there is no historical evidence worth any consideration.

. . . . .

What I have desired to do in this chapter is to let it appear that, if a person will approach the Gospels without a dogmatic prejudice that miracles are incredible, he will find himself convinced that they actually occurred, and in particular that Jesus Christ was really raised from the dead the third day, really gave to His disciples the symbolical assurance of an ascension heavenward, and was really born of a virgin mother.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

ON THE READING IN LUKE i. 34

Dr. Streeter, in his work *The Four Gospels* (Macmillan 1924), p. 267, suggests that " in Luke extraordinarily little emphasis is laid on " the virginity of Mary. He avoids the evidence of i. 34 by calling attention to the reading of one Latin MS. of the fifth century, which omits Mary's question, " How shall this be, seeing I know not a man ? " and substitutes her affirmation of ver. 38, " Behold the handmaid of the Lord, etc." I will not discuss the weight to be assigned to this one MS. against all the other MSS. and versions ; but surely verses 35–37, " The angel answered, etc.," suggest that Mary had asked a question and that the answer consists in an appeal to an action of exceptional divine power, of which the birth of John from a woman as old as Elizabeth was another (though a lesser) example. The context implies the miracle.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

Let us review the course of our argument. After analysing the causes of the existing collapse in the religious tradition among Englishmen (chap. i, p. 1), we sought to make a fresh start and rebuild from its foundation the fabric of a rational belief, laying stress on the importance for everyone of seeking to form decisions—at least such provisional decisions, based on the balance of probabilities, as can be "put to account" by faith, and being verified in experience can become convictions, or what St. John calls knowledge.[1]

Thus, after some consideration of the varied means and methods of apprehending truth (chap. ii, p. 29), we examined the grounds which seem to make faith in God in some sense a rational necessity. But this sort of philosophical faith (what is called "the higher Pantheism") we found intellectually unsatisfactory because of the seriousness and magnitude of the questions to which it supplies either no answer or a very vacillating answer. The immanent God of philosophy, whose transcendence the reason seems unable to establish, appears on being cross-questioned to be no more than nature in one of its aspects. His (or its) personality and character seems uncertain, and the grounds for belief or disbelief in the ultimate supremacy of moral purpose in the world deeply conflicting. Thus the higher Pantheism is always in danger of lapsing into the lower Pantheism, and in result seems to leave us practically where the Greeks were before the vast moral uplift of Jewish and Christian Theism came into our world. Especially from the religious point of view this immanent God who is to be found in all things, but cannot be conceived of as entertaining any particular purpose, or answering particular prayers, or loving or judging individual men, is utterly unsatisfying. Our minds turned longingly to the God of the Hebrew prophets and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (chap. iii, p. 45).

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[1] 1 John v. 18, 19, 20.

We satisfied ourselves that reason has no right to decide *a priori* that the old idea of a divine revelation is rationally untenable, and very carefully we sought to examine the grounds of this belief. Critically scrutinized, we found them in a high degree convincing. We found that it is very hard to resist the conviction that the prophets and Jesus Christ (regarded at present as simply one of the prophets) were in touch—as other men were not—with Reality, with the real God; and that in a long and continuous process, more or less gradual, He was really communicating to them the truth by which men could live, both about the divine nature and purpose and about human nature. The indisputable access of moral power and capacity to deal with life, which the faithful recipients of this word of God are seen to have received of old and still receive, appears to certificate the truth of the message which is the source of this new power; for the communicated power depends wholly on the revelation being regarded as true, that is, as true for the intellect

—postulating propositions about God and man and the universe which must be truths for philosophy as well as " practical truths " (chap. iv, p. 74).

Then we analysed the intellectual content of the Revelation and found that, while it needs and can assimilate, as it did in fact assimilate, the philosophical belief in the divine immanence in nature, yet it lays its stress on the Personality of God, His absoluteness, His transcendence as the creator of all that is, prior to the world and independent of it, and His essential goodness and love. And with regard to man, we found it emphasizing his freedom, created as he is for free correspondence with God and for immortal sonship, and also his sins and his sinfulness. This universal human sin has introduced into the world the most widespread havoc, and has made necessary a divine process of judgement and also of redemption, which, beginning through the Jews, shows itself universal in Jesus Christ, and expresses itself in a divine kingdom here and now at work in the world, and destined for final victory in the Day of the Lord, when God shall come into His own in His whole universe (chap. v, p. 110).

These new *data* for philosophy we then brought back to the area of intellectual criticism. We did not find that (*a*) science, legitimately so called, could offer any valid objection to their acceptance, the reality of freedom in man with all its intellectual implications being a fact of experience which science cannot ignore. Then (*b*) in the region of philosophy, when we are frank with ourselves and candidly open-minded, we discover that the idea of God which Hebrew religion supplied to the world is infinitely more intelligible than the idea of the philosophers, inasmuch as personality rather than abstract intellect is its dominant category, both in its estimate of God and of man. In particular we seemed to see the intellectual necessity for the belief in God the Creator. There remained, we found, a very real and serious difficulty in interpreting the whole experience of the universe—including the seemingly purely material and animal world—in terms of divine goodness and love. Nevertheless, in the region of human life, the doctrine of God's goodness has been undoubtedly verified in the deepest experience of the best of men, not least in the greatest sufferers, and we could not feel justified in refusing the act of faith which assents to it as true for the whole universe in its final outcome. Also we satisfied ourselves that (*c*) neither the science of comparative religion nor (*d*) that of historical criticism offers, so far, any bar to the acceptance of the religion of the prophets and of Christ as true in fact and for all men.

Thus our acceptance of the reality of divine revelation leaves us free men, intellectually, in the regions of philosophy and the sciences (chap. vi, p. 133).

This faith postulates God as entertaining and carrying out a particular purpose of redemption, which begins with the race of Israel and discloses itself as universal in Jesus Christ. As proceeding through a particular race and expressing itself in its history, the religion of the Old Testament is an historical religion, but it depends upon no particular incident which critical science is tempted to deny. But when we advance upon the New Testament, the situation is quite different. There the divine self-disclosure culminates in a particular person, Jesus Christ, who comes to be believed in as the personal incarnation of God (though with this special belief about the person of Christ we are not concerned in this volume), and whose recorded life is full of miraculous incidents, some of which—as His birth of a virgin, His resurrection, His ascension—appear as articles in the Christian Creed—essential elements of the self-disclosure of God. But criticism has been exhibiting now for some three generations an even violent aversion to miracle. Thus the attempt is made to disembarrass Christianity from the supposed disadvantages of the miraculous and (generally) of the supernatural. That an "historical religion" in the Christian sense has grave disadvantages in a critical age is obvious. On the other hand, we were forced to see how the strength of Christianity, especially as appealing to the common man, lay in its being a creed of facts. In particular we were led to stress the value of facts for religion by contrast to symbolic stories or Platonic myths (chap. vii, p. 171).

Thus, to put the "historical religion" to the test, we took a preliminary survey of the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament documents, and we found ourselves on very sure grounds of history. The historicity of the New Testament on the whole appeared to be singularly convincing (chap. viii, p. 184). We went back accordingly and examined the underlying spirit and motive of the destructive criticism of the last century, and we found that there could be no mistake about its strong, dogmatic prejudice against the miraculous and in great part the supernatural, such as has made the critics most arbitrary and uncritical in their treatment of the evidence. We examined the confident assertion of a few English scholars that the miracles could be eliminated from the Creed without touching the doctrinal foundation and found it singularly groundless (chap. ix, p. 215). Then we sought to analyse the intellectual bases of this critical prejudice against miracles and against the supernatural, and seemed to find in its bases a view of nature, as both mechanical and self-complete, which is without justification. It seemed to us that the fact of freedom in nature, which inevitably extends itself from man to God from whom it comes, opens the door to the possibility of miraculous action, the postulate of miracles being the real freedom of God to "use means" for the redemption of a world that sin has destroyed. We observed that miracles rightly conceived, or as they are presented to us in the New Testament, are not arbitrary violations of the world order, but rather divine acts done for the restoration of an order which sin had too grossly violated. Other aspects of the miraculous were considered, and we were left determined to investigate the question of evidence without any obstinate and blinding prejudice (chap. x, p. 230). Thus we sought to estimate the evidence for the reality of our Lord's miracles as a whole, both "nature miracles" and miracles of healing, and then in particular the evidence for the great miraculous events in our Lord's story, which have been taken up as elements in the Christian Creed, the resurrection the third day from the dead, the ascension, and the birth of Mary the Virgin. It appeared to us that the evidence of actual occurrence was so cogent that nothing short of dogmatic *a priori* assertion of their impossibility, or at least incredibility—an assertion which we cannot make—could justify the refusal of it. And accordingly we are bound to accept these miracles as real occurrences (chap. xi, p. 252).

Three points shall be made in conclusion:

1. My aim in this volume has been simply the reconstruction of belief in God, and particularly of such belief in God as is the background and pre-

supposition of the distinctively Christian beliefs, and such as is specially due to the prophets of Israel. But we have been driven upon the field of the New Testament for two reasons. Though we have considered Jesus of Nazareth only as a prophet, we cannot ignore the fact that, while He bases Himself upon the religion of the prophets, He yet advances upon it, and claims to have more to say with an authority which is altogether His own. Thus the prophetic doctrine of God is not complete except with the doctrine of Jesus included. But I have been driven more directly upon the ground of New Testament criticism by the question of miracles, and this because it is directly bound up with the fundamental question of the nature of God ; and before you can have satisfactory discussion of the specifically Christian questions—about Christ's person—about the atonement—about the Holy Trinity—you must have reached a stable position about this doctrine of God. Now if, as has been contended in this book, the prophets of Israel were the organs of a real self-disclosure of God, intended for the whole world but given in the first instance through them, then there can be to my mind no question at all but that miracles of God's working are possible and credible on adequate evidence. The evidence is there, cogent and, as it would seem, unanswerable. What hinders acceptance of the miraculous is the absence of belief that the God of the prophets is the real God. There will be no revival of specifically Christian belief except on the basis of, or accompanied with, a revived belief in the God of the prophets, and, conversely, granted the God of the prophets to be real, the claim for miracles will be at least no obstacle to belief in the Creeds. I go further and say that miracles, i.e.

actions of God in nature marking His special intention for the redemption of mankind, will seem, at the crucial moment of religious history, so natural as to be almost inevitable accompaniments of the revelation. On the other hand, the disbelief in miracles is not really based on historical criticism, but on a belief about God which is at bottom a rejection of the prophetic claim to reveal the real God, and a return to what is substantially the Greek philosophic theory of God, which Christianity in part assimilated, but in more important respects displaced. This higher Pantheism, both of the ancient Greeks and of the majority of modern philosophers, has so feeble a hold on the divine transcendence, and even personality, and at bottom is so deeply inclined to an identification of God and nature, like Spinoza's, that it can find no place for miracles and is bound to explain them away. But also the faith of the higher Pantheism is so uncertain of the moral character of the Ultimate Reality—so uncertain whether goodness is more than one element in a universe which is much greater than it—as to weaken profoundly, especially in the conscience of the " ordinary man," the sense of the final supremacy of moral purpose in the world. This is to say, in other words, that the higher Pantheism tends inevitably in common opinion to become the lower Pantheism, which merges God in nature and takes for inevitable all that is. I do not think it is open to doubt that the belief in the real occurrence of miracles and the belief in the God of the prophets are bound up with one another in an inevitable coherence. And, on the other hand, by a like inevitable coherence, the denial of the credibility of miracles is bound up with a disbelief in the prophetic God and a relapse upon a kind of Pantheism which substantially is that of the

Greek philosophers, especially in its effect or lack of effect upon the common conscience.

2. Secondly, I want to make this point. I think the decision in the great alternative, to which I have just called attention, turns, to an extent which it is hard to exaggerate, upon the question of the reality of freewill in man, not in any exaggerated sense, but in the restricted yet real sense which I have endeavoured to define above.[1] If man is really free, there is a real element of creativeness and spontaneity and contingency in the heart of nature, the conception of which may be extended indefinitely, but which is, at least, there where man is. The time process, the true meaning of which becomes first apparent in man, is then shown to have real meaning. God may, nay, as I have contended, must, be conceived of as prior to creation or nature, complete in Himself. But creation, or the process of nature, is a continuous process in which it is the purpose of God to reproduce in a gradual order, and finally, at least, by the co-operation of free spirits, an expression of His being and will. This is what we may reverently call an enterprise or an adventure on the part of God, because the element of freedom—freedom which may prove lawless—is something which God Himself will not overrule. The time series represents, with all its elements of contingency and uncertainty, a real and long-continued effort of God, though its end is certain. And this freedom allowed to man postulates a like and much deeper freedom in God, and supplies, as has been pointed out, the rationale for God's miraculous actions—that is, His occasional innovations upon normal method. On the other hand, if freedom is denied to man, it becomes natural to think of real

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[1] See above, pp. 139 ff., 234 ff.

freedom as a vain imagination in the case of God also. Nature becomes simply the necessary self-expression of God. Whatever is, could not have been otherwise. The whole time series becomes inevitable, and, more than inevitable, illusory. All that, at the bottom, is really there for the purified intellect to contemplate is the absolute nature, the eternal and inevitable "must have been."

3. Finally, I want to point out the modification which belief in the reality of the self-disclosure of God through the Hebrew prophets introduces into the current doctrine of Relativity, of which Lord Haldane has recently been the prophet. No one, I think, can dispute the truth of this doctrine, though whether Einstein's discoveries and theories do more than show it in a novel light I do not feel sure. Anyway, the postulates of each branch of human science are not final and necessary truths, but are relative to the particular science; and the absolute point of view, from which all must be harmonized, is hard to come by, and may be unattainable for ever by the finite minds of men. Probably the mind of man is not capable of discovering absolute truth. This applies to moral truth as much as to any other department of reality, for the judgements of the conscience are not, and never can be, absolutely the judgements of God. It applies also (even on the postulate of revelation) to theology. The theologians have always emphasized this. "We see through a glass darkly" in our thought about the ultimate things. Nevertheless, this necessary doctrine of relativity does not supply any valid ground for excluding the idea that behind the veil of creation lies the Personal God. Creation, as Dr. Pringle Pattison and Lord Haldane say, appears in "layers": upon the merely physical or material

supervenes the vital, and upon the vital the rational and the personal. And the personal is, at least, a better image of God than the merely vital or merely mechanical. God, be it said, is superpersonal, but at least personal. Then also the supremely personal can act as a person. He can reveal Himself more intensely here than there. There is no legitimate ground for a dogmatic exclusion of this possibility. And on the surest grounds, as it seems to us, we have found this to be not only possible as a theory but actual as a fact. For those who accept revelation as a fact, in a particular line of history, mediated through the prophets of Israel and culminating in Christ, the doctrine of relativity is certainly not obliterated or negatived. The revelation of God in Christ may be spoken of as establishing " the absolute religion," in the sense that it is, for this world, final and universal, but it does not mean that " the absolute truth " is there unveiled. At least Christianity has never made any such claim. It has never claimed for us in our present condition the power to see God as He is. But, granted this, it does, none the less, introduce a limiting element into the doctrine of relativity. For here, given through the prophets and in Christ, we have not merely a judgement of human reason or conscience liable to all the uncertainties and relativities of such a judgement, but a real word of God. Such word of God is given through men and for men, as they now are, and must therefore be, as compared to absolute truth, relative and imperfect. But the truth which the self-disclosure of God enables us and requires us to put into human words is, as compared to all other human propositions about God, necessarily of a higher quality and infinitely more trustworthy. Any real belief in a divine self-disclosure carries with it the belief that the word of God is trustworthy and has an infinitely higher measure of truth than any merely human judgement. Granted that it is gradually given, yet it must be at each stage as close an expression of absolute truth as human thought and words admit of. It is for practical purposes absolute truth, because it can be relied on utterly. This gradual revelation in its earlier stages was always invested with divine authority as far as it went. But in Christ it is postulated for it that it attains completeness and finality. That claim we have not yet sought to estimate. Without assuming finality for Christ, let us be content to recognize that if we believe the authority behind the prophets and Jesus Christ really to be the will of the Personal God revealing Himself to man, the " word of God " proclaimed by them must be admitted to be in such real sense *absolutely* true, that it is true for all men and the highest kind of truth about God which man can attain. It is absolutely true in the sense that any human propositions which really ignore it or contradict it are misleading and false.

BOOK II

BELIEF IN CHRIST

CHAPTER I

THE JEWISH BACKGROUND

TWICE in the Gospels Jesus is represented as asking a question bearing upon His own person. The first occasion was at the opening of what we may call the second stage of His mission, when an intense opposition centring in the religious leaders of Israel, the scribes and Pharisees, had declared itself openly in Galilee, and the faith of His first eager disciples was beginning to be deeply tested.[1] Then it was that, away from the centres of the life of Israel, almost as a fugitive, in the neighbourhood of a city beyond the Jordan, whose very name—Caesarea Philippi—would strike upon Jewish ears as repulsively alien, He pressed upon His disciples the direct question: "Who do ye say that I am?" He had asked them first what people in general were saying about Him, and that question was easily answered. It was generally believed that He was someone extraordinary, of prophetic character and divine commission.[2] But more than such vague answers is expected of the disciples. The question is again pressed home: "Who do ye say that I am?" And Peter commits himself to the great confession: "Thou art the Christ."

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[1] Mark iii 6, 22, vii 1–13, viii 11, 15. The great question is recorded in viii 27 ff.

[2] What exactly was meant by saying He was John the Baptist, or Elijah, or one of the prophets is not easy to define. It must be remembered that the Messianic king, the remote descendant of David, is, as in Jer. xxx 9, Ezek. xxxiv 24, Is. lv 4, called simply David; in like manner a successor of John the Baptist or of Elijah might be called simply by his name. People might say—Here we have John the Baptist, or—Here we have Elijah, over again.

Once again on the eve of the Passion Jesus is represented as asking—not the disciples, but the Pharisees[1]—"What think ye of the Christ? Whose son is He?" It was a question not directly about His own person, but about their idea of "Him who was to come." But in the minds of the disciples, who believed Him to be the Christ, it must have sounded as a question about Himself. And both these questions asked by our Lord imply that His person presented a problem which must be raised and solved. And it is characteristic of our Lord's generally undogmatic method as a teacher that He insists that the answer should be found as a judgment of men's own minds under the teaching of God, rather than by any explicit pronouncement from His own lips.

As we know in history, the answer of the first disciples, who became the Church of Jesus Christ, was given gradually or in stages. First it was that Jesus is the Christ. Then that Jesus is Lord. Finally that Jesus, the Christ, is the pre-existent Son of God, Himself very God, who for us men and for our salvation was made flesh. This final answer was formulated in Creeds and protected by dogmatic decisions, and became the central point of the Christian faith.

To-day when the questions of our Lord are quoted —"Who do ye say that I am?" "What think ye of Christ?"—what is generally intended is to ask whether the familiar doctrine of the Church concerning the person of Jesus gives the true answer to these questions. In our day it is widely questioned and sometimes scornfully repudiated; or it is suggested that the precise answer to be given to these questions does not seriously matter, if only we are agreed in following the example of the life of Jesus. But the world cannot settle down to regard Jesus as nothing more than the best of men or the greatest of spiritual teachers. Most men feel that there is something mysterious and unique about His person. Nor does it seem possible to leave the great question unanswered. It obtrudes itself upon us and demands an answer. And if we cannot be content to receive passively the dogmatic teaching of the Church, but feel the necessity of opening afresh the question for ourselves, certainly it is not our Lord who will condemn us. He certainly would have men think for themselves, and reach a personal conviction which they can feel to be wrought into their souls by God's own Spirit.

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[1] As represented in Matt. xxii 41. In Mark xii 35 the question is asked of the people, in view of the teaching of the scribes, "How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?" So in Luke xx 41. I have retained the more familiar form of the question as the difference is irrelevant.

The purpose of this volume, then, is to make the enquiry about Christ's person afresh, with a mind as open as possible to all sources of evidence, and with a resolute determination to go "whither the argument leads." But I shall take for granted the conclusions reached in the volume which preceded this on Belief in God. That is to say that I shall take for granted not only that there is a God in some sense, but that He has really disclosed Himself to men, especially in a historical process through the prophets of Israel and through Jesus of Nazareth, who, whatever else He was, was "a prophet mighty in word and in deed" in the succession of the prophets of Israel. Thus the God in whom we start by believing is indeed the one supreme Spirit who is present and active everywhere in the world, but He is also beyond the world and above it, subsisting in the fulness of personal consciousness and will before the world was: awful in holiness and perfect in goodness, power, and wisdom: the absolute Creator of all that is, and the Father and Judge of all rational spirits. For the justification of this faith I must refer back to the reasonings of my first volume. When I say that it will here be taken for granted, I mean that anyone who is to read this volume sympathetically and judge of it fairly, must be prepared at least to accept it as a provisional hypothesis with the consequences which the preceding volume indicated. He must not have his mind closed by a dogmatic prejudice against that kind of redemptive action of a personal God to which the Bible witnesses, or against such special acts of God as we call miraculous. He must be prepared to follow along the lines of the growth of the apostolic faith and to seek with an open mind to appreciate its grounds.

In standing upon this platform to start with, we have this advantage, that we start where the first disciples—we may say with all reverence where Jesus Himself—started. For the Gospels make it quite evident that Jesus took for granted the God of Israel and the religion of Israel,[1] even while He deepened the thought of God and emancipated the religion from its Pharisaic fetters. Professor Bethune Baker has recently said "I know almost nothing about God's character apart from Jesus."[2] This is a not unfamiliar position, but it is to me amazing. Something surely of an important kind about the character of God had become apparent to deep-thinking men, like Zoroaster and Aeschylus and Plato, all the world over, and Dr. Bethune Baker is surely the last man to wish to ignore these verdicts of the natural conscience. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Baron Friedrich von Hügel, who is always bidding us keep in mind that it was not only along the line of Israel that mankind had gained real knowledge of God. But what is from our present point of view much more important is that "the Jesus of history" would assuredly have utterly repudiated the supposition that He was to teach men their first serious lessons about God's character. He certainly assumed that His hearers knew a great deal about it—all, in fact, that the prophets had told men, for whom the character of God was the main theme of their mission.

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[1] See *Belief in God*, pp. 94–5.

[2] *The Modern Churchman*, Sept. 1921, p. 301.

I will counter Dr. Bethune Baker's statement with another,[1] which, if somewhat exaggerated in the other direction, is far nearer the truth than his: "In what way did the teaching of Jesus differ from that of His contemporaries? Not—and the nature of much modern writing renders it desirable to emphasize the negative—not by teaching anything about God essentially new to Jewish ears. The God of Jesus is the God of the Jews, about whom He says nothing which cannot be paralleled in Jewish literature." I think this is an exaggeration. The teaching of Jesus about the character of God, as the Father of each individual soul whose love goes out to seek and save the lost—the God in whose eyes each individual soul is of identical and absolute value—the Father represented in the Parable of the Prodigal Son—is surely fresh teaching. Certainly our Lord set the character of God in a quite new light in manifold ways. Certainly also His teaching was no borrowed or merely traditional teaching. He said "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him." But the God and Father of whom He constantly spoke was the Jehovah of the Jewish prophets and Psalmists.[2]

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[1] From Drs. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (Macmillan, 1920), vol. i. p. 288.

[2] The only word ascribed to our Lord which appears at first sight to be a repudiation of His Jewish forerunners is John x 8: "All

There was, in fact, no wavering in the early Church as to the continuity and identity of their faith with the old Jewish faith about God. When St. Paul quotes "the Scriptures," though it be a predominantly Gentile Church to which he is writing, he means the books of the Hebrew canon. When he says "Whatsoever things were written beforehand were written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope," or that "every Scripture, inspired of God, is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work,"[1] it is the Hebrew scriptures exclusively that he is thinking of. Indeed, both in St. Paul's and St. Peter's Epistles and in St. James and in the Acts and in the Epistle to the Hebrews the constant assumption is that the Christian Church was the old Jewish Church, the Church of the prophets, reformed and reinspired. This alone accounts for the fact that the earliest Church put in the foremost place among its appeals the argument from prophecy.

Thus it came about that the Bible of the Jews became the Bible of the Christian Church before the New Testament books were written. It is indeed astonishing how wholeheartedly the Gentile world,

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that came before me are thieves and robbers : but the sheep did not hear them." But to interpret this single word as a repudiation of Moses and the prophets and John the Baptist would be in glaring contradiction to the Gospels generally and to the Fourth Gospel in particular. See i 7–8, 17, 31, 45, ii 16, iii 10, iv 22, v 46–7, vii 22–3, viii 56, xii 14–16, 39–41, xix 28, 36, 37. The mind of the writer of the Gospel is such that he could not have ascribed to our Lord any repudiation of the ancient prophets. To interpret this startling saying we must refer back to Jer. xxiii 1–4, and Ezek. xxxiv 1–16, concerning the shepherds (rulers) of Israel who maltreat and neglect the flock, with whom our Lord associates the present rulers of Israel, the Pharisees and Sadducees who are set to harass and persecute His disciples, the sheep who hear His voice.

[1] Rom. xv 4, 2 Tim. iii 16–17.

which came very speedily to constitute the vast majority of the Christian society, accepted the Old Testament. There were, no doubt, rebels against such acceptance in the second century, of whom the famous heresiarch Marcion was the most important. He would have discarded the Old Testament and all that belonged to it as the work not of the Supreme Being, but of another lower God, the creator (demiurge) of the material world. He would have had the Church preach a Jesus who revealed a supreme and hitherto unknown God, and a Jesus who had not even a real body of material flesh, such as must have been a creation of the dishonoured demiurge of the Old Testament. There are moderns, amongst whom is Dr. Harnack,[1] who have very deep sympathy with Marcion, at least in his attempt to discard the Old Testament out of the Canon. But the Church teachers would have nothing to do with his revolutionary proposal. They clung to the Old Testament. They saw clearly enough that to reject the Old Testament would be to reject the Jesus of history who stood without hesitation upon that platform.

This is all the more noticeable because some at least of the teachers of the early Church did not, like those of the mediaeval Church or the Churches of the Reformation, rate the Old Testament too high. These Fathers acknowledged frankly that its institutions of worship were of heathen origin and its morals to start with on a barbaric level.[2] But they were full of the principle of God's gradual working in the education of mankind. He justifies Himself, they said, by the results. Only by a large toleration of what was unworthy in a half-barbarous group of tribes, only by a divine patience and gradualness, could He have educated them up to the level of the teaching first of the prophets and then of Jesus. Even St. Augustine, who is in a measure responsible for the over-estimate of the Old Testament, says that we wrong the New Testament if we put the Old on a level with it.[1] Nevertheless all the Fathers saw that the religion of Jesus Christ is the outcome of a historical process, and its roots are fixed in Israel. The Old Testament and the New cohere inseparably. St. Paul is quite right in saying that as an apostle of Jesus Christ there has been no change in the object of his worship. It is still "the God of our fathers" whom he serves with a pure conscience,[2] and the whole Christian Church, though in the main Gentile in origin, in believing in Jesus, knew they were accepting as the true God the God of Abraham, Moses, and the prophets.

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[1] See Harnack, *Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (Leipzig, 1921), pp. 248 ff. See also an interesting review of the book by Lowther Clarke in *Theology*, vol. iii. no. 17.

[2] Cf. *Lux Mundi*, pp. 240–2 and Pref. p. xxii.

It was the conviction that the self-revelation of God given through the Hebrew prophets was true and real that made the Christian Church, when it went out into the world of the Roman empire, intensely and deliberately combative not merely for *some* belief in God, but for the specific belief inherited from Israel and consummated in Christ.[3] And this had two very important results—first, that it made impossible for the teachers of the Christian Church the "deification" of their Master.

I

As we have seen, the question for the Christian Church became very soon—Is this Jesus, who is clearly divine in some sense, really God? And that is the question which interests us to-day. And the answer we give depends for its meaning on what we understand by God. The world into which the Church went out used the term God in a very loose and comprehensive sense. There were Gods many. The heavenly bodies were unanimously believed to be Gods, and very formidable Gods too, for they dominated the world, like remorseless fates.[1] Further, there were deified men in abundance—such as the old hero Heracles, or ancient founders, like Romulus, or the recent founders of the Empire, Julius and Augustus, or philosophers who had brought men the truth. Even the Epicureans regularly called their founder Epicurus a God. And the philosophers who believed in a sense in the unity of God found no difficulty in this wide use of the term God. For to them, according to the current Stoicism, God was reason, and reason was God—the reason in all things and the reason in men. Men, therefore, were portions of God in respect of their reason. God and man were of one substance. The more rational a person was the more he became god.[2]

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[1] Aug. *de Gest. Pelag.* 15.

[2] Acts xxii 14, xxiv 14; 2 Tim. i 3.

[3] See *Belief in God*, pp. 108 f., 129 ff., 150 ff.

There is a curious passage quoted by Origen from some contemporary writer on the Stoic use of words who defines a "god" in its most general sense as "an immortal, rational being; in which sense every rational soul is a god." Others, he says, add to the definition that a god must be pure spirit, in which case human souls will only become gods when their souls leave their bodies. Others only make the requirement of moral goodness. "So that every seemly soul is already a god," even while it is still in the body. Others confine the term god to beings "who have some control in the world in respect of its administration, like the sun and the moon. In a different sense the word is applied to the supreme administrator. And above all they call god the being immortal and uncreated, the supreme king, which is the universe."[1] The great philosopher Plotinus in the third century insisted that the root and source of all things is in unity—in the One. But this did not hinder him from recognizing gods in the sun and the stars and the gods of popular tradition. With him also the term God "n'est pas du tout un terme réservé,"[2] and this because reason and God are the same thing. And thus, because godhead was comparatively a vulgar thing, Plotinus very seldom calls his Supreme Being, the One, by the name God. Rather, as he is above reason, so he is something above God.

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[1] See Edwyn Bevan, *Hellenism and Christianity* (George Allen & Unwin, 1921), p. 78: "It was from Babylon that the fear of the stars and especially of the seven [the Sun and Moon and the Five Planets] had spread through the Roman Empire. It became an obsession. This earth, the sphere of their tyranny, took on a sinister and dreadful aspect."

[2] See Bevan, *Stoics and Sceptics*, p. 41. The Stoic poet Manilius is quoted as saying "Quis possit . . . Et reperire deum, nisi qui pars ipse deorum est?" Cf. Arnou, *Le désir de Dieu dans la philosophie de Plotin* (Paris, 1921), p. 145, note 4.

Obviously from this—the Hellenic—point of view, it would have been easy and inevitable to deify Jesus or to call Him a god. How should one so excellent in power and goodness not be a god? I shall have occasion shortly to discuss the position of the German, Wilhelm Bousset, and his school, who contend that in the early Hellenistic churches it was in fact this pagan spirit which came to be dominant and led to the conception of Jesus as God.

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[1] This passage is in the Prologue to Origen on the Psalms; see Lommatzsch, tom. xi. 351; cf. Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma* (Engl. trans.), vol. i. p. 119 n., and Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, App. III. There is no doubt that this Hellenic use of the term God in a very wide sense affected some Christian writers, as, e.g., when Clement of Alexandria speaks of the soul of man by a true knowledge and righteousness "practising to be god" (μελετᾷ εἶναι θεὸς, *Strom.* vi. chap. xiv. sect. 113); and Greek Fathers sometimes speak of Christians, in Christ, "being made god" (θεοποιεῖσθαι). Such language is derived from the common Hellenic use, but it is not properly Christian. On the whole matter of Hellenic beliefs, Jules Lebreton's *Les Origines du Dogme de la Trinité* (Paris, 1919), chap. i., may be very profitably consulted.

[2] Arnou, *op. cit.* pp. 108, 124 f.

But, even according to this school of critics, this supposed assimilation of the beliefs and worship of the Church to the model of the religions about them was not possible on the soil of Palestine or in the first Jewish circles of the Church. For these first disciples the idea of a man being raised to divine honours was something impossible to entertain. No doubt the religion of Israel had grown upon the common soil of Semitic religions, and the terminology of polytheism slightly taints the Old Testament at its earliest levels.[1] But this taint had long centuries ago been scrupulously purged away. Only One could be called God or worshipped by any Jew, He who in the true Jewish spirit is called "the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen nor can see."[2] Greeks might identify God and man, but to an Israelite there was no distinction so deep and impassable as the distinction of the Creator from all His creatures, even the highest.

Nor was it at all within the compass of the contemporary Jewish imagination that God should manifest Himself in human form. Doubtless there had been in old days theophanies. God, they read in the Scriptures, had manifested Himself, as it appeared, even in human form to men. But these were momentary epiphanies; they had long ceased; and the later theology had explained them away. There was no tendency of thought among the Jews of the time after the Captivity such as would have led naturally towards an idea of incarnation.

II

The dominant thought of the Greek world, when Christianity came into it, was pantheistic and polytheistic, but earlier, as in Aristotle, and later, as in Plotinus, there was a philosophical monotheism which believed in the existence of one God absolutely separated from mundane and human affairs, who could take no interest in man, and could influence the world only as an object of desire or intellectual contemplation. Now the religion of the Jews was a monotheism, but totally different from this religion of the philosophers. The one God of the Hebrews, Jehovah, was thought of as intensely concerned in the world and in mankind, as constantly active both in nature and in man. And He had made man in His own image and likeness, so that the activities and emotions of the human mind had their source and counterpart in Him.

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[1] See appended note A, p. 324.

[2] 1 Tim. vi 15–16.

That admirable Anglican mystic of the seventeenth century, Thomas Treherne, vividly contrasts the heathen deities who " wanted nothing " with " the Lord God of Israel, the living and true God," who " from all eternity wanted like a God. He wanted the communication of the divine essence, and persons to enjoy it. He wanted worlds, He wanted spectators, He wanted joys, He wanted treasures." [1] It was because of this divine " want " of an enlarging fellowship in the divine life and activity that He had created rational spirits and had appointed men as His vicegerents in the world to " have dominion over the works of His hands." [2] But on the widest scale God had been disappointed in man. Rebellion on his part had baffled God's purpose. Nevertheless, God had not abandoned His good mind towards man, but had proceeded to carry it out by a method of election.

Again and again God is represented as choosing, and making covenant with, some selected group to be the agents of His universal purpose. So it was with the family of Noah, with Abraham, with Isaac, with Israel under Moses, with the remnant of Israel who returned, purged and faithful, from the Captivity. And all this selective method of God, choosing a small group out of the whole of mankind to be His instruments, for all its apparent narrowness, had always a universal purpose, as is declared in the call of Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This is where Israel stands distinctive among the nations of the earth[1]—in their intense belief in an energetic divine purpose, of which only their own nation is the selected instrument, but which through their nation is to become the heritage of all the world, and which at the last, in spite of all the wilfulness of man, is certainly to take full effect. Because God is God, at the last shall be the Day of the Lord, when God shall come into His own in the whole creation. Thus it is that Israel was the parent of what the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce proclaims to be the only true history, the history which is also philosophy, which sees the past as alive in the present and pressing on towards a goal and consummation in the future.[2]

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[1] See T. Treherne, *Centuries of Meditations* (Dobell, 1908), p. 29.
[2] Gen. i 28, Ps. viii 5–8.

The Greeks and Romans never discarded their old legend of a Golden Age in some remote past followed by a gradual decline age after age, so that they are almost totally without the sense of a progressive purpose in the world; and if their imagination wanders beyond the present world-order they conceive, more after the manner of the Easterns, of innumerable cycles of time, each characterized by gradual deterioration and ending in final catastrophe, without any divine purpose running through the ages as a whole and moving on to its consummation.[1] Of this conception of divine purpose running through all things and destined to final effectiveness in spite of all failures and catastrophes by the way—for which the rebellion of free spirits is responsible—a divine purpose with which it is man's highest joy to co-operate—of this infinitely fruitful belief in a divine purpose of progress the religion of Israel is the effective source.

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[1] See, however, Note B at the end of this chapter on the idea of divine purpose in the teaching of Zoroaster.

[2] See Benedetto Croce, *Teoria e storia della storiographia* (Bari. 1917), pp. 186–92; and see *Belief in God*, p. 132, note 1.

III

This expectation of a kingdom of God[2] to come is as fully important an element in the Jewish background of Jesus as the belief in the one only God, the righteous Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth. And it is necessary for us to get as clear a picture in our minds as possible of the great expectation, as it had been formed in earlier days, and as it was held at the time of our Lord's birth, education, and ministry. Let us dwell first on some central and classical expression of the hope from early times.

Here is one which is common to Isaiah and Micah[3]:

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law (or 'instruction'), and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge between the nations, and shall reprove many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

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[1] See Bevan, *Hellenism and Christianity*, pp. 180 ff.: "In some form or other this idea, that the present is vastly inferior to an ideal past, seems to have been general in classical antiquity. In the philosophic schools naturally an attempt was made to get a more far-reaching view of the universe, and here the notion was elaborated of the process of things being a cyclic movement, in which history repeated itself over and over again without any end." . . . "Decline within each period and the periods endlessly repeating themselves in an unvarying round." The whole chapter should be read.

[2] The actual phrase "the kingdom of God" or "the kingdom of heaven," as something to be established in the future, does not appear to occur earlier than the Gospels (see Foakes Jackson and Lake's *Beginnings of Christianity*, vol. i. pp. 269–70). But the idea is constant in the prophets and the phrase also, or something like it, in the sense of the divine sovereignty, *e.g.* Ps. cxlv 12–13.

[3] Is. ii 2–4, Micah iv 1–3.

This great vision, and many like it, will be found to involve certain distinguishable elements.

(1) The idea of the spiritual sovereignty and universality of the religion of Israel—so that all nations must seek the word of the Lord from Israel as its commissioned dispenser. This idea finds vivid expression again and again in passages which are amongst the loftiest in the Old Testament, as when Isaiah sees Egypt and Assyria linked with one another in one religion through Israel as its medium [1]; or the Second Isaiah sees faithful Israel, now purified, reinstated, and reunited, set "for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles" [2]; or Zechariah sees "ten men, out of all the languages of the nations, taking hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" [3]; or Malachi discerns a catholic church as already in being—"from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name great among the heathen; and in every place incense offered unto my name, and a pure offering" [4]; or a late prophet sees Jerusalem as the scene of a divine banquet for all nations "of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined," and of

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[1] Is. xix 23–5.
[2] Is. xlii 6.
[3] Zech. viii 23.
[4] Malachi i 11.

a radiant life of knowledge, immortality and joy[1]; or finally where the Psalmist sees the men of all nations calling Zion their mother.[2] It is a fall from this high level when the final vindication of Israel appears as merely their victory over the heathen.

(2) But, secondly, this glorious vision is only possible if all the horrible tyrannies, the monstrous fabrics of pride, insolence, cruelty and lust, which vex the groaning earth, have been crushed and annihilated, either by the manifest hand of God working through whatever external agency He may choose, or by the strengthening of Israel and its king. Thus a great part of the writings of the prophets is occupied with the "dooms" upon Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Tyre, and the rest. But so corrupt and false to its trust is Israel itself, God's chosen instrument, that it too must fall under scathing judgment, only never, like the other world powers,[3] to the point of its utter destruction. Israel suffers only thereby to be purged, and, though it be but as a faithful remnant, to pursue its course. People sometimes ask what element of inspiration there is in the Book of Esther, and why it is in the Canon. I should be disposed to answer that nowhere is the sense of the indestructibility of Israel, even under circumstances of extremest peril, coupled with the responsibility of all individual Israelites for the maintenance of their faith and loyalty, expressed more vividly than in the words of Mordecai to Esther, the Jewish wife of a Persian king—"Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether

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[1] Is. xxv 6–8.

[2] Ps. lxxxvii 5. So the Greek Bible rendered it: "Zion is our mother."

[3] Only in Jeremiah is the idea of a restoration appended also to the dooms upon the nations, or some of them: see Jer. xlvi 26, xlviii 47, xlix 6, 39. But see also xxx 11.

holdest thy peace at this time, then shall relief and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall perish; and who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"[1]

(3) In the prophecies which secured the strongest hold on the imagination of the people, the divine instrument of the sovereignty of Israel is to be an anointed king of the house of David, "the Christ" (anointed one) as he alone came in later days to be called. This became the national hope—the raising up by the hand of God of the righteous king of David's line, who is to administer the divine righteousness on earth with a resistless power and finally in perfect peace—to whom God stands so close that he is to be called His Son[2] and to bear His name upon him, "Immanuel, God with us," "Mighty God, Everlasting Father."[3]

The prophets generally see the glorious Messianic day looming in the immediate future just behind their present troubles and sufferings,[4] just as they see the purging judgment over the whole world behind each particular judgment on each nation which sets itself in turn against God and His people.[5] These immediate expectations are never realized. Nevertheless, their failure does not destroy the confident expectation. As God is God, so at last it must be. Even when the figure of the sovereign king of David's line is absent, the vision of the kingdom remains. And before our Lord's time, though the hope of the world-sovereignty of Israel never looked so remote as under Roman supremacy, the figure of the victorious king of David's line is again brought into prominence. In the "Psalms of Solomon"—a Pharisaic work of some fifty years before our Lord's day—the expected kingdom has again its centre in the wonderful and all-powerful king, who is there first apparently called "the Lord Christ."[1]

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[1] Esther iv 13–14.

[2] Ps. ii 7 and (?) 12, lxxxix 26–7.

[3] Is. vii 14, ix 6. The Jews seem never to have interpreted these names as meaning that the King was himself to be God. It was the name of God that was to be upon him; cf. Micah v 4. We must always distinguish the original sense of the prophecies from that which the Christian teachers saw in them. But it is, of course, quite credible that the sense later assigned to them may have lain in the intention of the inspiring Spirit. In some cases I should find it difficult to doubt this.

[4] See especially Is. vii 10–17 and Micah v 5: cf. the expectation concerning Zerubbabel in Haggai, and the expectation of Jewish sovereignty in Daniel immediately after the downfall of Antiochus Epiphanes.

[5] See later, pp. 435 ff.

(4) The vision of the days of the Messiah, or of the good time to come, which formed so large a part of the prophetic message, vague as it remained in its details, had some other definite features which must be noted as forming part of the Jewish background of the New Testament. Israel, restored, converted and supreme, is to be granted by God *a new and everlasting Covenant* which shall renew the old covenant made with David and augment its spiritual richness.[2] It is to be accompanied by an *outpouring of the divine Spirit* "upon all flesh,"[3] and by *a resurrection* of righteous Israelites, who have died before the dawning of the great day, to participate in its blessings.[4] We cannot understand the New Testament unless we remember that the coming of the glorious kingdom, or reign of God and His Anointed, was to be accompanied by the inauguration

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[1] Ps. Sol. xvii 36 : "They are all holy and their king is Christ the Lord" (*Χριστὸς Κύριος*), or it may be translated "an anointed Lord." But in Lam. iv 20 the Hebrew text "The Lord's anointed" appears in the Greek Bible as *Χριστὸς Κύριος*.

[2] Jer. xxxii 40, 15, Ezek. xvi 60, Is. lv 3, lix 21.

[3] See Ezek. xi 19, xxxvi 24 ff., xxxvii 14, xxxix 29, Is. xxxii 15, xliv 3, lix 21, Zech. xii 10, Joel ii 28–29. The centre of this effusion of the Holy Spirit of God is the Messiah himself (Is. xi 1, 2), or "the Servant of Jehovah" (xlii 1, lxi 1). But the Messiah does not appear in O.T. prophecy as himself destined to give the Spirit to his new people.

[4] Is. xxvi 19, Dan. xii 2. (Here also is the resurrection of the unfaithful to shame and contempt.)

of a New Covenant, the effusion of the divine Spirit, and the Resurrection of the Dead.[1]

(5) This was the hope of Israel, vague in detail, but fairly definite in general outline, which we find in possession as soon as we approach the Gospels, in its more spiritual form in the hopes of the humble and pious folk among whom our Lord was born, and in a fiercer secular form in the zealous nationalism of the popular heart. How Jesus both accepted and transmuted this hope it will be in part our business to consider.

But there is one feature of this hope, to which we shall have to give more detailed consideration when we come to speak of the much discussed subject of our Lord's apocalyptic teaching,[2] but which we must not omit now. We shall find our Lord speaking of Himself as "the Son of Man" who is to come at the last on the clouds of heaven, with the holy angels, in great power and glory, to judge the world and gather together His elect.[3] Now there is one only passage in the Old Testament—a passage which had clearly been given great importance—to which this language refers. It is the vision of Daniel.[4]

> And behold there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

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[1] I say nothing here of the figure of the Servant of Jehovah, who redeems Israel by the sacrifice of his life, in Is. lii, liii, which seems to have taken no hold on the imagination of Israel before our Lord's time.

[2] Cap. V. p. 433.

[3] See Mark xiii 26–27 and xiv 62.

[4] Dan. vii. 13–27.

In this vision the being in the form of a son of man stands not for the Christ but for the people of Israel—the "people of the saints of the most high," just as the four animal forms who come out of the sea[1] represent the empires of Babylon, Media, Persia and Greece. They are all merely symbolic figures. What the writer is contemplating under these figures is the establishment, in the place of the Empire of the Seleucid successors of Alexander the Great, now represented by the persecutor Antiochus Epiphanes, of the people of Israel in triumph upon the earth. It is the old Messianic hope without mention of the Messiah.

In the past it was thought that our Lord was simply referring back to this vision, interpreting the figure like to a son of man of the Christ, instead of the whole people of Israel; just as He interpreted the Suffering Servant of Jehovah as the Christ, whereas originally he had stood for the whole people, or the whole of the faithful remnant. But recent study has brought into much prominence the later Jewish Apocalypses, and amongst them, most conspicuously, the Book of Enoch and the part of that composite book which is called the Similitudes, which is held to date from the first century before Christ. And in these Similitudes a unique representation is found. The imagery of the Book of Daniel is revived in a new sense. A celestial being, called the Elect One, in the form of a son of man, and called also "the Son of Man,"[2] who has existed in heaven from the beginning, is summoned forth by "the Lord of Spirits" (that is the name of God in these Similitudes) to sit upon His throne and execute His judgment upon the sinful world. He is twice called "the Anointed,"[1] but otherwise suggests in no respect the Christ of Jewish tradition, the anointed King of David's line. He is a heavenly being, neither God nor properly man, but man-like. But the language used by our Lord about the coming of the Son of Man in judgment so much more closely represents the idea of these Similitudes than the idea of Daniel that it is difficult to doubt that our Lord had it in mind. We remember that the Epistle of Jude, one of "the brethren of the Lord," is full of reminiscences of the Book of Enoch, and there is no reason why our Lord should not have been acquainted with it.[2] Only if so, as we shall see, He sets its imagery on a wholly new background in applying it to Himself.

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[1] Verse 3.

[2] The passages, however, which call him the Elect One and those which call him the Son of Man are held by the experts to have belonged originally to different documents.

We shall have to return to this subject when we are examining our Lord's language. But it is necessary, in describing the Jewish hope, to say something about these Jewish Apocalypses which have lately been engaging so much attention.[3]

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[1] In c. xlviii 10 and lii 4. But see *Beginnings of Christianity*, p. 371. Note also that in lxxi 14, as it stands, Enoch himself is said to be constituted the Son of Man. Dr. Charles, however, would alter the text. On the very ambiguous nature of the document see appended note, p. 326.

[2] I am assuming what I see no good reason to doubt, that the author of the Epistle of Jude was really one of our Lord's family, probably a half-brother.

[3] For a general account of the Apocalyptic literature we may go to Dr. Charles, *Between the Old and New Testaments* (Williams & Norgate, "Home University Library"), or to Lagrange, *op. cit.*, or to Drs. Foakes Jackson and Lake, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 following.

Dr. Charles is an expert and, like most experts, is over-enthusiastic on his special subject and, I think, greatly exaggerates its importance. And an American writer, Dr. Simkhovitch, not a theologian by profession but an economist, who has published an exceedingly interesting essay, *Towards the Understanding of Jesus* (Macmillan, New York, 1921), expresses feelings about these apocalypses which many of us will be found to share: "In the apocalyptic and eschatological literature of the time the world was to come to an end. But what really did come to an end in that literature was the last shred of thinking capacity and common sense." He would perhaps admit that 2 Esdras is a partial exception.

This not very attractive type of literature was quite unknown to our learned men of old, except in the case of the Apocalypse of Ezra, which we find in our "Apocrypha" as the Second Book of Esdras. These apocalypses belong to the centuries immediately before or after the birth of our Lord. They were soon discarded by Jews and Christians alike, but found favour for a time in some quarters, and many of them survive in translations into many languages, indicating their former popularity. They are written as in the persons of ancient seers—Adam, Enoch, Noah, the sons of Jacob, Moses, Ezra—recording visions of the mysteries of nature and creation, and of the angels and of the future destinies of the world, the day of judgment, and heaven and hell.[1] And one of their chief characteristics may be said to be that, instead of this world being the scene of the kingdom of God (as in the Old Testament), this world is represented, at least in many of them, as wholly passing away and another world, the world of heaven and hell, as taking its place.

In the prophets and psalms we have a great deal of language about nature, which represents it as violently moved in sympathy with God's acts of judgment and mercy, and in terror at His coming. "The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord." "All the host of heaven shall be dissolved and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll." "The sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." "The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." We shall have to come back upon this sort of language, where we find the like to it being used by our Lord and His disciples. It is difficult to say how far it is consciously metaphorical. Certainly in the later days of prophecy the prophets contemplated a physical catastrophe on the vastest scale accompanying the divine judgments on the world and the ushering in of the divine kingdom. The old heaven and the old earth yield to a new heaven and a new earth. But the new heaven and the new earth always, on examination, appear to be the old heaven and the old earth purified and renewed, with Jerusalem still at the centre and the nations of the world doing her homage.[1]

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[1] They seem, in their speculative interest in the mysteries of nature and the unseen world, and their elaborate doctrine of angels and in their "other world" hopes, to exhibit an influence alien to Israel. We may perhaps find in Persia the source of this influence.

But this was not the case in the later Apocalypses. There, says Dr. Harnack,[2] "the expectations for the future become more and more transcendent; they are shifted increasingly to the realm of the supernatural and the supramundane; something quite new comes down from heaven to earth, and the new course on which the world enters severs it from the old; *nay this earth*, transfigured as it will be, *is no longer the final goal; the idea of an absolute bliss arises whose abode can only be heaven itself.*" So also Dr. Charles writes: "The hope of an eternal Messianic kingdom on the present earth, which had been taught by the Old Testament prophets and cherished by every Israelite, was then abandoned. The earth had come to be regarded as wholly unfit for the manifestation of the kingdom."[3]

I cannot but think that in recent literature the importance of these Apocalypses has been immensely exaggerated. For example, we are constantly told that the established belief of the Jews and of the Pharisees in particular, and therefore of St. Paul in his Pharisaic days, included the belief in a Messiah pre-existing in the heavens, after the manner of the "elect one" of the Book of Enoch. This I believe to be so exaggerated an estimate as to be positively untrue, and I have dealt with this at some length in a note appended to this chapter. What I would seek to do here is to point out that the heavenly being of *Enoch*, though he may be called the anointed one, is a substitute for the Christ of Jewish tradition and quite different in idea. When the Jewish idea of a Messianic kingdom of perfection in this world was abandoned by the apocalyptic writers in favour of another world wholly different from this, the tradition of the Messianic kingdom to come became an awkward encumbrance which could not be fitted into their scheme. They either left it out altogether (like the author of our Similitudes of Enoch) and let the day of judgment and the other world succeed at once to the confusions of this world, or they interposed the Messianic kingdom, with or without the personal Messiah, as a temporary preparation for, or foretaste of, the real heaven to come,[1] to be succeeded in its turn by conflict and confusion. From their point of view the Messiah and his kingdom upon earth were not wanted. What they wanted was the other world. And the so-called Messiah of the Book of Enoch, who is the divine instrument of judgment and the harbinger of the world to come, is a substitute for the human king of the family of David who was to inaugurate the kingdom of God in this world. The two ideas belong to different orders of thought. Now, no doubt, the Messianic hope when our Lord came into the world was full of confusions. Nevertheless nothing is more certain than that what was in possession, and remained in possession, was the old orthodox Jewish tradition of a king of David's line who was to restore the kingdom to Israel and to make Israel the centre of a world-wide kingdom of God. How our Lord dealt with this expectation, and what use He made of the apocalyptic idea on a new basis, we shall see in due course. But all the evidence shows that the old Jewish tradition, as it appears in the "Psalms of Solomon," and not the apocalyptic vision, possessed the ground in the New Testament times. This is the Messianic hope of the circle of humble, pious folk among whom our Lord was born. This is the basis of the preaching of John the Baptist, as it is represented in the Gospels, who expects and finds the Christ as a man among men on earth. All the anxious questioning of the Jews expressed in the Gospels concerning the origin of the Christ, and what is to be expected of Him, is on the same basis. God was "to restore again the kingdom to Israel" through an anointed king of David's line. Like the influence of the Essenes, which hardly appears in the New Testament, so the influence of the apocalypses doubtless existed in a certain circle—a circle, we suspect, from which our Lord was not wholly alien—but it was by no means dominant or common. This the evidence seems to indicate quite unmistakably.[1]

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[1] See Is. xxiv 23 (apparently a late prophecy incorporated in Isaiah), and Is. lxvi 19–24 and Joel ii 32, iii 16. So it is, as we shall see, in the New Testament.

[2] *What is Christianity?* (Eng. Trans., Williams & Norgate), p. 137.

[3] *Between the Old and the New Testaments*, p. 119. If Dr. Charles means by "then," at the date *c.* 100 B.C., when the new style of apocalypse begins, then the statement is not, I think, true. The old hope survived in full operation into N.T. times—see *The Psalms of Solomon* and the N.T. But it is true within a certain range of feeling or thought represented in these apocalypses.

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[1] This is the first form of the idea of the millennium, which we find in the Revelation of St. John.

On this basis I may quite briefly indicate the standpoints of the different parties among the Jews with whose names the Gospels make us familiar—the Sadducees, the Herodians, the Pharisees; and I must add, though the name is only once mentioned, the Zealots.[1]

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[1] See Matt. ii 4–6, Luke i 32–3, 54–5, 76–9, ii 11, 26, 34, 38. For the preaching of John the Baptist see p. 341. For later indications see Matt. xii 23, xxii 41 ff., xxiv 5, 24, xxvii 42, Mark x 47, xi 10, Luke iv 41 ff., ix 20, Acts i 6; cf. John i 41, 45–9, iv 25, vi 15, vii 41–2.

The Sadducees are most favourably represented in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, which appears to belong to their tradition. In the New Testament their chief representatives are the high priestly family of Annas, a thoroughly worldly group, occupied with the interests of their position, and determined, above all things, to keep on good terms with Rome, so as to retain whatever relative independence and governing authority were still allowed to them. They probably were totally without the Messianic expectation, and, indeed, it is not anywhere suggested in Ecclesiasticus.

The Herodians were no doubt equally alien to it. They were the adherents of a semi-Jewish dynasty whose consistent policy had been, while maintaining the Jewish religion, at least in form, and giving it a magnificent shrine in the new temple at Jerusalem, to favour the absorption of Israel in the general world of the Roman Empire.[2]

But the Pharisees, as Josephus says, "had the multitude on their side." They were the real leaders of religion. Not that they were advocates of armed resistance to Rome. They saw the hopelessness of this, and in fact they had apparently joined in the petition, offered to Augustus soon after our Lord's birth, that Judaea might be made a Roman province. They anticipated, no doubt, less interference with true religion under a religiously indifferent Roman governor than under an Herodian prince bent on secularizing Judaism. But they held passionately to the hope of the Messiah. We probably interpret them best if we represent them as believing that the chosen people, by the strict observance of the law and the tradition of the elders, would merit and obtain such favour of God as that He would bare His arm and work the great redemption by His own omnipotence.

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[1] The point of view of these parties, in relation to our Lord's teaching, is admirably characterized in Professor Vladimir Simkhovitch's *Towards the Understanding of Jesus* (Macmillan, New York, 1921)—a most interesting study; also in Stephen Liberty's *Political Relations of Christ's Ministry* (Milford, 1916).

That one of the apostles is called the Zealot indicates, what other evidence indicates, that the party was already in existence, as assuredly its spirit was. Of the Essenes, as they do not cross our path in the N.T., I say nothing.

[2] Simkhovitch, *op. cit.* pp. 15–17.

But this acquiescence in foreign sovereignty did not satisfy the people as a whole. Since the days of the Maccabean revolt, under the Greek and the Roman yoke alike, Judaea seethed with nationalism, and the Zealots were the extremists in this movement. For them the hope of the Messiah meant the hope of a king who would lead them in revolt against the Roman supremacy, and, by the power of God assisting him, do as the Maccabees had done of old, only on a very much grander scale—that is, win liberty for Israel, and even world sovereignty. It is impossible to read the pages of the Jewish historian Josephus, without seeing what a seething mass of nationalism Judaea was in our Lord's lifetime, and how the Messianic hope presented itself to the heart of the people.[1]

. . . . . .

I hope enough has been said to enable any reader who has an ordinary acquaintance with the Old Testament to realize the extreme importance of beginning the study of Christ on the background of the traditional Jewish faith and hope. This is equally important for what it excludes—that is, the possibility of our Lord's first disciples "deifying" their honoured Master in the way Greeks would have done, because their minds were full of the "jealousy" of the One God the Creator; and for what it involves—that is the eager expectation of divine redemption, which, at the period when Jesus was born, was especially acute, and which ran upon the traditional lines of the prophetic forecast of the Messiah and his kingdom on earth.

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[1] See Simkhovitch, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 f.: "The religion of their forefathers became [to the Jewish people at large] the unfurled banner of a nation at bay. . . . From now on, whether in passive resistance or in open rebellion, the only Lord and Master they recognised was the Lord of Hosts . . . with whom they were in covenant, and who must send the great Deliverer to save His people in their hour of need." Cf. p. 30 and p. 48: "The loud nationalist call to rebellion, the fervid hope for a Messiah, God's anointed leader and the redeemer of Israel, stirred the deepest emotions."

Note A

Traces of Polytheism in the Old Testament

As is well known, the common Hebrew word for God is a plural "elohim." But this is interpreted by A. B. Davidson (*The Theol. of the O.T.*, p. 100) and Driver (*Genesis*, pp. 402 ff.) as a plural of majesty rather than as a relic of polytheism. Nevertheless, we find phrases in the O.T. which suggest that there were other Gods besides Jehovah—phrases which would not have been used in the later days of Israel: and the same must be said of the use of *elohim* for judges and rulers (Psalm lxxxii 6), or for the dead (1 Sam. xxviii 13), or perhaps for angels (Psalm viii 5). Such uses are probably derived from a tradition older than strict monotheism. But all this laxer use of the title God had been rendered impossible by the teaching of the Prophets. Only One could be called God or worshipped.

Of course the use of Psalm lxxxii ("I have said ye are Gods") ascribed to Jesus in John x 34 is interesting. It might suggest that our Lord wished to encourage something like the extended Hellenic use of the term God. But a single phrase in a single Gospel must not be interpreted so as to be quite out of harmony with the general teaching of our Lord. This particular passage is, I think, one of those in which (granted its genuineness) our Lord asks questions solely to force men to think out their own meaning without conveying any positive teaching at all. He means "How can you object to my calling myself the Son of God, when you yourselves are bound to recognize that in the Psalms judges are even called Gods in some sense? There is here plainly some sort of communication of divine authority to men such as you should recognize also in me." I shall have occasion later (pp 482 f.) to point out that it was part of the method of our Lord to test men's sincerity and consistency by questions which cannot be taken as suggesting any positive teaching on His part, *e.g.* Mark x 18 and xii 35–37.

NOTE B

The Idea of Divine Purpose in the Teaching of Zoroaster

Quite independently of Israel, the Persian or Iranian race, under the prophetic guidance of Zoroaster, whose date is quite uncertain but who was assuredly a real man and a great prophetic soul, was taught to see this world as the scene of a divine purpose one day to triumph. No doubt Zoroaster inherited a tradition of dualism and himself affirmed it. Certainly he saw this world, and the larger universe, as the scene of a conflict between a good spirit and a bad. But the good spirit is to triumph. "Deliverers" or "saviours" are sent to help forward his victory. And the call to all men is to exercise their free will by co-operating with the good god and His instruments, and so "make the world advance." The end—"the last turning of the creation in its course"—is certain. The scene of history is to close in a day of judgment, beyond which is a perpetual heaven for the righteous ("the best mental state"), perhaps a perpetual hell ("the worst life") for "the liars" or those who have followed the false spirit, and a middle region for "those whose false things and good things balance." This primitive ethical gospel of Zoroaster became much overlaid and buried in rubbish; and thus it contrasts with the Jewish faith in having been on the whole ineffectual over any wide area: see Dr. Sydney Cave's *Introd. to the Study of some Living Religions of the East* (Duckworth, 1921—a very useful study), pp. 64 ff.;

cf. Höffding's *Philosophy of Religion* (Eng. trans., Macmillan, 1906), p. 53, and Bevan's *Hellenism and Christianity*, p. 187, where, however, the statement that Zoroaster looked for one Saviour in the fulness of time to destroy evil does not seem to be borne out by the earliest authorities. It is certainly not to be found in the deeply interesting Gathas (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxxi.).

In the recent work of Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christenthums*, vol. ii., a very important place is assigned to Persian beliefs—the beliefs emanating from Zoroaster—in influencing the later religion of Israel. In particular the whole idea of the "world to come" as a world quite different from the present world—a world of heaven and hell which begins when this world has vanished—such as appears in some of the later Jewish Apocalypses, is supposed to be due to Persian influences, and also the developed angelology and doctrine of Satan. But Meyer is certainly mistaken in ascribing "dualism"[1] to the Jews.

NOTE C

The Belief in the Pre-existing Son of Man

It is the fashion to-day to speak as if the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, of our Lord's day believed in the Messiah as the Son of Man, already existing in the heaven from the beginning of time and destined to be *manifested* in God's good time. So Dr. Rashdall[1] (quoting Weiss): "Wrede and Brüchner have conclusively shown that Paul before his conversion held the belief, as a Pharisee, that the Messiah existed from all eternity with God in heaven." Thus, "as an apostle of Christ, he thought of Jesus as the Messiah and therefore . . . a heavenly being who existed with the Father before His manifestation on earth." So Dr. Stanton[2]: The pre-existence of Jesus "was inevitably suggested by the identification of Jesus with the heavenly Son of Man." So also Dr. Harris, *Creeds or No Creeds* (Murray, 1922): "It is one of the most assured results of recent

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[1] *Idea of Atonement*, pp. 127–9.

[2] *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, vol. iii, p. 171.

Synoptic criticism (liberal as well as orthodox) that the title Son of Man implies pre-existence, and that not merely impersonal or ideal pre-existence, but actual and personal pre-existence in a state of divine glory and majesty with the Father in heaven" (see pp. 220, 264, 367). But we must confront these scholars with Dalman,[1] than whom, I suppose, there is no greater authority on Jewish matters: "Judaism has never known anything of a pre-existence peculiar to the Messiah, *antecedent to his birth as a human being*." "The dominance of the idea in any Jewish circle whatever cannot seriously be upheld." "The common opinion that Paul simply adopted his designation of Christ as 'the last Adam' and 'the second man' from the Rabbinic theology is erroneous, for their theology knew nothing of such a comparison between Adam and the Messiah." Nor did it know anything of a *pre-existent* ideal man. Dalman seems to me to prove his case.

(1) In documents which can reasonably be held to be pre-Christian there is nothing to suggest a pre-existing Son of Man or pre-existing Messiah except the Similitudes of Enoch, of which we are just going to speak, and in post-Christian Judaism only the "Ezra Apocalypse" (see 2 Esdras vii 28, xii 32, xiii 26–52, xiv 9),[2] and nothing else till we come to a seventh- or eighth-century document, and later to mediaeval mysticism. The only pre-Christian ground of the idea, then, appears to be the Similitudes of Enoch.

(2) But we must be very careful in quoting this document. What we have to do with is a translation in Ethiopic from a Greek translation of the original. Our existing version is confessedly greatly interpolated. Moreover, it has passed through Christian hands. Again, the critics rightly discern, underlying our existing Ethiopic text, *two documents*, from which the relevant passages are quoted—one of which (A) speaks of a celestial figure which is called "the Elect One," and

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[1] *Words of Jesus*, pp. 128–32, 248, 252. See also Bousset quoted in *Can We then Believe*, p. 184.

[2] See Dr. Box's *The Ezra Apocalypse* (Pitman, 1912). The date of the whole book is c. A.D. 120. Some of the passages referred to belong to an older document, c. A.D. 90.

another different document (B) which speaks of "another being whose countenance had the appearance of a man," and who is afterwards called "that Son of Man" or "the Son of Man."[1] Both documents appear to have assigned to the celestial figure the same functions, though pre-existence is only asserted of "the Son of Man."[2] Now it seems to be probable that the document (A) is original and the document (B) interpolated either by a Jew who sought to divert the title Son of Man, derived from the Book of Daniel, from the Christian human-born Christ, or (less probably) by a Christian from a somewhat different motive. See Lagrange *Le Messianisme chez les Juifs* (Paris: Lecoffre, 1909)—a careful and exhaustive examination. On the general idea of pre-existence see pp. 42 ff.; on *the Similitudes*, pp. 87 f.

Further, we must notice that the Similitudes as they stand give a confused impression. The "Son of Man," or Elect One, is a celestial quasi-angelic being who is properly neither God nor man and is never destined for human birth and life. He is rather a substitute for the Messiah than the Messiah (see *Beginnings of Christianity*, by Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, p. 371). But in one passage (lxxi 14), which is supported by another interpolated passage (lx 10) and by the "Book of the Secrets of Enoch" (see Lagrange, p. 97) Enoch himself is represented as that Son of Man. (See *Beginnings*, p. 371; also Bousset *Die Religion des Judentums*, p. 306. Dr. Charles would alter the meaning of the text by suggesting an interpolation.)

(3) Dr. Charles' theory that the wicked 'Kings' and 'mighty men' of the Similitudes, whom the Elect is to overthrow, are the later Maccabean princes is surely contradicted by the plain statement that they are idolaters. "Their faith is in the gods which they have made with their hands" (xlvi 7). His suggested parallels from the Psalms of Solomon are not parallels. There the Maccabean rulers are described as worse than the heathen (*Ps. Sol.* i 8, viii 14, xvii 16) but not as idolaters. The fact that in the Similitudes the adversaries are described

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[1] See Charles, *Book of Enoch*, pp. 64–5.

[2] Charles, *op. cit.* p. 65.

as heathen seems to leave us without any certain evidence of date except what is found in the traces of the Similitudes in the Gospels.

(4) All, then, that I think it is at all safe to assume is that the pre-Christian author of the Similitudes of the Book of Enoch borrowed from Daniel the idea of a celestial figure " like unto a Son of Man "—regarded it as an individual and not a mere image of the sacred nation—called the individual " the elect one," and represented him (still with Daniel) as coming on the clouds of heaven to " the Lord of Spirits " (as he calls God) and being appointed by God to sit on His throne and judge the world and usher in the world to come. This celestial being was, of course, conceived as pre-existing, and the idea would have been known to whatever circle of persons was familiar with the Similitudes. But the circle does not appear to have been a large one. As I have shown, it was the old-fashioned idea of the Messiah, who was to be the Son of David and to restore the kingdom to Israel on earth, which is assumed to prevail in the Gospels and early chapters of Acts, and none other. And it is (I think) quite certain that in our Lord's day " the Son of Man " was not recognized (before He adopted the name) as a title of the Messiah. Also there does not appear to be in the New Testament any recognition whatever of a pre-existing *Man* or celestial being in human form (see below, pp. 372 n. 2, 383 f., 411, 609). See further *Can we then Believe?* n. 2, p. 181.

CHAPTER II

THE BELIEF OF THE FIRST DISCIPLES

Upon the basis of the Jew's belief in God, and his vivid, though confused, expectation of His coming and His kingdom, our task lies now with a certain group of Jews, the first disciples of Jesus. We have to examine the gradual growth of their faith in their Master, first as the promised Messiah, then as the Lord of all, then as the incarnate Son of God; and our object will be to enquire whether this faith, as it reaches expression in St. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews and St. John, was in such sense inevitable, or required by the facts of the case, as that it can be pronounced the only legitimate interpretation of the person of Jesus, valid for us to-day as for them of old.

I

This is a profoundly interesting study of the growth of a conviction in a gradually expanding group: but it is also a difficult study because every step of our progress will be over ground which has been the subject of acute controversy—controversy which is still as far as possible from any general settlement in the world of Biblical criticism; and my readers must be patient with me if I proceed very carefully.

As has been explained[1] in the volume which preceded this, the mass of the critical work which has been poured from the European press, and the most famous of the attempted reconstructions of "the Jesus of history," have been produced upon the basis of an assumption that the miraculous and generally the supernatural—that is the coming of God into the world of man and nature in a new sense with a directly redemptive purpose, accompanied with special acts calculated to mark that purpose—cannot really have occurred, or, at any rate, is not rationally credible. As has been shown, to start from such an intellectual assumption involves very violent treatment of our documents, the Gospels, which are full of the miraculous and of the faith in a special activity of God for the redemption of mankind. Thus it leaves the fabric of the evangelical narrative in so shattered and precarious a condition (as anyone can see for himself) that each critic who aims at reconstruction can select and reject amongst the materials that remain almost at will. This is what accounts for the amazing differences in the resultant "Jesus of History" which is offered us by different schools of critics.

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[1] *Belief in God*, pp. 215 ff.

(1) To-day there are three such schools which excite the most interest. There is first the Liberal Protestant School, of which Professor Harnack may be taken as the outstanding representative. In his famous lectures on "The Essence of Christianity"[1] Jesus appears as a simple and gracious figure indeed, preaching an ethical gospel, inspired by the conviction of the Fatherhood of God, the infinite and equal worth of every human soul, the duty and joy of self-sacrifice and brotherliness, and the inwardness of true religion or the kingdom of God. "In the combination of these ideas—God the Father, providence, the position of men as God's children,

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[1] In the English translation, *What is Christianity?* (Williams and Norgate); in the original, *Das Wesen des Christenthums*.

the infinite value of the human soul—the whole gospel is expressed."[1] The work of the gracious teacher was accompanied by a marvellous power of healing ("by suggestion" as we should now say), which is represented in an exaggerated form in the Gospels as they stand, mixed with nature miracles which, of course, it is taken for granted cannot really have occurred.[2] But the "miracles," of whatever sort they were, and the claim of Jesus to be the Christ (which in some sense is admitted), with everything that would involve superhuman quality in Him, are passed over by Harnack very lightly. His ethical teaching and influence was the thing that mattered. The subsequent belief of the disciples in His corporal resurrection from the dead, and their expectation of His coming in glory, and the later introduction of a doctrine of Incarnation, with a metaphysic of Christ's person and of the Trinity in God, and the theory of a visible church with sacraments and priesthood—all these elements of Christianity are treated as regrettable necessities, due in part to the pressure first of the Jewish and then of the Hellenic environment, and in part to the exigences of an elementary organization struggling to maintain itself. They were the husk necessary for the time to the preservation of the kernel. They are for the most part quite alien to the spirit and intention of Jesus, and their sole justification lies in the extent to which they enabled the one thing necessary—the essential ethical spirit of Jesus—to maintain itself and again and again to be revived. But the Christ of Pauline and Johannine theology, and even the Christ of the Acts, stands already at a great distance from the Jesus of history.

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[1] *Op. cit.* p. 70; cf. p. 79: "The thought that he who loses his life shall save it . . . effects a transmutation of values."

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 27–31.

(2) In violent contrast to the Jesus of the Liberal Protestant School, which has many representatives in this country, stands the Jesus of the Apocalyptic school represented by Schweitzer and Loisy, which also has had great influence on not a few English writers.[1]

All the startling "apocalyptic" features of the Gospels which Harnack sought to eliminate or reduce in significance, are by these writers brought to the front in their reconstruction of the original history, and made to occupy almost the whole ground. Jesus is represented as what we cannot but call an enthusiastic fanatic, who believed himself to be destined to be manifested immediately from heaven as the Christ or the Son of Man (of the Book of Enoch) to judge the present world and inaugurate the next world.

Schweitzer and his school make it a chief point of their contention that "the Christ" of the Gospels is not an earthly person, but one to be manifested in glory from heaven, according to the picture in the Similitudes of Enoch. Therefore our Lord on earth was not the Christ, but only believed Himself to be destined to become the Christ on the Day of Judgment. Incidentally I would note[2] that this is flatly contrary to the evidence of the Gospels. There, whatever the Christ is afterwards to become, He is represented as first of all an earthly person, born of the seed of David.

When Jesus first sent out the Twelve, He expected

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[1] The best book by which to judge of Schweitzer's view is the second part of his treatise on "The Lord's Supper" (*Das Abendmahl*). This second part has been translated as *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God: The Secret of Jesus' Messiahship and Passion*, by Walter Lowrie, and published in New York (Dodd, Mead & Co., 1914). It is most illuminating. In his larger and later work, published in English as *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (Black, 1910), his theory is constantly referred to and assumed. But its grounds are not continuously given as in the earlier book.

[2] See below, p. 372, n. 1.

His coming as Christ to occur before their mission to the cities of Israel was completed, that is within a few weeks.[1] As a result of His disappointment in this expectation, and by reflecting on the death of John the Baptist and on the figure of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah liii, He came to the conviction that His own sacrificial death was necessary to bring the day of Resurrection and the coming of the Christ in glory, and so gave Himself to death. He died upon the cross with the cry of desolation on His lips, and left His disciples overwhelmed with the consciousness of failure. But their reviving faith, feeding upon "visions" of Jesus as risen and glorified, built the fabric of the belief of the earliest Church in the heavenly Christ immediately to appear in glory, which again was gradually transmuted into the Christ of later Christian belief. By this apocalyptic school of interpreters Christ's ethical teaching is even ludicrously minimized. He had, according to them, no thought of founding or refounding a Church to live a new kind of ethical life in this world. He was a man possessed with one idea, the idea of the immediate end of the world and of Himself as the instrument of the divine judgment; and this idea rendered all this world and its concerns a matter of little moment, as indeed the life of the world was almost over. All that is to be done is to repent and to detach oneself absolutely from all worldly ties, so as to be free to be admitted into the world to come which is immediately imminent.[2]

From this Jesus the Christ of the Church is indeed very far removed. It was only in fact by His ceasing to be remembered as historically He was, that He could be serviceable for the generations to come.

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[1] This is based on Matt. x 23, on which see below, p. 448 n.

[2] This is what is meant by describing Christ's moral teaching as merely "interims-ethik."

(3) There is a third school, for so it must be ranked, which is best represented by Bousset in Germany and Kirsopp Lake in England.[1] In this school the Jesus of history is a very dim figure indeed. Little or no originality of preaching about God or human life is ascribed to Him. He preached a "message of the kingdom of God and the duty of fellowship in righteousness and love and mercy and forgiveness,"[2] a message also of obedience to God and the pre-eminence of spiritual values, largely presented in parables. He died a loyal martyr to his witness for real righteousness against the selfish conservatism and religiosity of the Pharisees, the worldly hostility of the Sadducees, and the violent ideals of popular leaders of nationalism. But all the supernatural features of the Gospels, and almost all the apocalyptic claim, is to be ascribed to the first Jerusalem community of disciples, and not to Christ.[3]

The account which Bousset gives of the belief of this community is very similar to that given by Schweitzer, but it is ascribed, as I say, to the community and not to Jesus. This is the first transformation—that by which the historical Jesus becomes the apocalyptic Christ. The second transformation is still more important. It occurred in the Hellenistic churches such as Antioch, Tarsus and Damascus. There the Pagan religious world was largely occupied with "mystery cults"—that is religious societies, which worshipped hero-gods—Dionysus or Hermes or Serapis, or Cybele and Attis, or Osiris and Isis—by whose patronage they believed themselves to be about to be translated from the miseries and bondage of material life and death into immortality and bliss. These mystery religions, about which I shall have more to say, were "sacramental"—that is to say, participation in the blessings of the redemption offered by them was to be secured by undergoing certain ceremonies of initiation and subsequent fellowship in a community of initiated persons, who held some secrets of mystical knowledge not communicated to the outer world. And they had emancipated themselves from their original national or local boundaries, and become, as we may say, world religions. In these mystery religions the hero-God, who was the object of worship, was called "Lord." In the Christian communities, then, of the Hellenistic world Jesus also began to be called "Lord"; and this title, for the majority of the Gentile converts, carried with it all the associations of their former cults. Even before St. Paul came to the front in these Gentile churches, they were already in part assimilated to these Pagan societies. But it was St. Paul's genius which, on a basis of the old Jewish monotheism and apocalyptic beliefs, developed a doctrine of Jesus the Lord, the author of individual and present salvation "in Christ" or "in the Spirit," mediated by sacramental actions and in a sacramental fellowship, for any man of any race, whereby the old Jewish and the new Hellenic ideas of religion were brought together in one system; and this was the basis on which what we know as the theology and sacramental system of the Catholic church was founded. Substantially the same principles later found similar expression in the theology of the unknown thinker whom the Church called St. John. This was the second great transformation by which the Christ of St. Paul and of "St. John," which is almost the Christ of the Catholic Church, takes the place of the apocalyptic Christ, and becomes still further removed from the Jesus of history.

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[1] The central work of this school is *Kyrios Christos* (a history of the faith in Christ from the beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus), by Wilhelm Boussett, Göttingen, 1st ed. 1913. The school is best represented in England by Dr. Kirsopp Lake, *Landmarks of Early Christianity*, and the larger work, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, in which he collaborates with Dr. Foakes Jackson.

[2] Bousset, *op. cit.* p. 74.

[3] P. 333: "Hier nicht der historische Jesus spricht, sondern die Gemeinde, die ihren Glauben an den Menschensohn verkündet."

The educated Englishman to-day who is interested in religion is fairly familiar with the Liberal Protestant conception of Jesus, and with the conception of the Apocalyptic school. But the theory of the school of Bousset is still strange to him. However we shall hear more of it. We are being frequently warned by grave voices that this is the most important of the theories with which orthodoxy or traditional Christianity is confronted. I shall, of course, have to return to it, and to the others just described. But for the present I leave them. The method which I propose to follow is first of all positive not negative. Confessedly all these theories involve leaving out and repudiating as unhistorical large elements in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts as they stand. Now I am making no claim for complete freedom from error in the Gospels. But I have sought to establish[1] their claim to be regarded as serious history compiled by competent men, which must not be violently dealt with; and I have given my reasons at some length for refusing to regard the strictly miraculous and supernatural elements in the Gospel narratives as incredible on *a priori* grounds.[2]

I do not propose to go over this ground again; but perhaps I had better briefly restate the position with regard to the Gospels and Acts which it was sought to establish in the first volume and which is to be taken for granted in this.

The position is (1) that the second of our Gospels was really written by John Mark, who from his youth up had lived in his mother's house at Jerusalem, at the very centre of the apostolic fellowship, and had been afterwards the companion of his cousin Barnabas and of St. Paul, and more particularly.

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[1] See *Belief in God*, chaps. viii. and xi.

[2] *Belief in God*, chaps. ix. and x.

according to an early and trustworthy tradition, of St. Peter, whose customary teaching about the things said and done by Christ he set himself to reproduce as faithfully as possible; (2) that the third Gospel, which is based upon Mark's material, and also upon another document containing matter common to the third Gospel with the first, which is commonly called Q, as well as upon information from other "first-hand" sources, was really written by the physician Luke, the companion of St. Paul, who has explained his motive and his method in a luminous preface to his Gospel, which its contents amply vindicate; and (3) that the Acts is part of the same work as the Gospel, by the same author, who had the fullest opportunities of obtaining trustworthy information about the beginnings of the Christian Church. It follows that these books ought to be taken, provisionally but in all seriousness, as credible historical documents, unless indeed they should prove themselves otherwise.

I propose then that we should build the structure of our argument in the main upon the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke and upon the Acts, and upon the other books of the New Testament which are not involved in serious controversy, letting nothing of importance rest upon the unsupported testimony of the first Gospel and using the fourth only as subsidiary.[1]

But I would call my readers' attention to the fact that to-day controversy is not so much concerned as formerly with the authenticity and date of documents. Thus perhaps the most important recent German work on "Christian origins" is that of Eduard Meyer, the distinguished author of the immense *History of Antiquity* (*Geschichte des Alterthums*). He comes to his task [2] therefore on the basis of very wide knowledge and a high general authority as a historian. He talks with some impatience of modern criticism as unreasonable, meaning, I suppose, specially modern New Testament criticism.[1] He ascribes the third Gospel and the Acts to Luke[2] and the second Gospel to Mark, the "interpreter" (Dolmetscher) of Peter, according to the tradition,[3] and recognizes the work of Matthew behind our first Gospel. If he has in fact to give his readers a conception of Jesus widely different from that of the Evangelists, it is not because they were not in a position to know the facts, but because he cannot apparently conceive of the supernatural as being really historical.[4] It is just this assumption that I desire we should not take with us to our study of the Evangelists, but should approach them with an open mind and give them a chance to tell their story as to those who have ears to hear.

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[1] But see below, Chapter IV., pp. 403 f.

[2] The *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christenthums*, 1921, in two volumes, awaiting a third. See further *Can We then Believe*, pp. 81 ff.

II

All the Gospels put the activity of Jesus upon the immediate background of the preaching of the great prophet who deeply stirred Jewish society, John the Baptist. Josephus, the Jewish historian, gives some account of him as a good man and a preacher of righteousness, who used baptism as his instrument for gathering the followers of righteousness together; and tells us that because of the great excitement which he caused among the people and the persuasive power over them which he showed, Herod put him to death for fear he should cause some rebellion; and he thought it better to act betimes and put him out of the way rather than to repent at leisure for having done nothing.[1] In all the Gospels he is presented to us, not only as a preacher of righteousness, who revived the memories of the old prophets by the tremendous force of his denunciations and encouragements, but also as one who was conscious of a definite mission to proclaim the immediate advent of the Kingdom of God, to herald the Christ who was to come, and "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."[2]

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[1] *E.g.* vol. i. p. 314: "How that (*i.e.* that the author of the Fourth Gospel *intended to represent himself as being* John the son of Zebedee) can have been called in question is one of the many things which remain unintelligible to me in the positions of modern criticism."

[2] See p. 51.

[3] P. 159.

[4] See, for example, his account of the Last Supper, pp. 174 ff., and of the saying of Matt. xi 25 ff., p. 291.

There are matters of detail concerning the Baptist on which the Gospels appear to disagree, but on the chief points which alone concern our present enquiry we may feel sure.

(1) The spirit of ancient prophecy revived in John in the sense especially that for him the coming of the Kingdom was as far as possible from being something which the nation, as it was, could afford to welcome. Their eager nationalism was not enough. God who was to visit them in the coming of His

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[1] *Antiq.* xviii. 52. Josephus' particular phrases are obscure, though the general sense is plain. The editors of the *Beginnings of Christianity*, pp. 101 ff., put a definite meaning on Josephus which, I think, Mr. Creed (*J.T.S.*, Oct. 1921, p. 59) has shown to be mistaken.

The motive assigned to Herod for John's imprisonment is not necessarily exclusive of the motive assigned by the Gospels. His motives may well have been mixed. It has been pointed out (*Belief in God*, p. 206) that Josephus, writing always to conciliate Roman opinion, observes a discreet silence about Christianity; and his silence about any relation of John to Jesus should not be allowed to discredit the Gospel account.

[2] The phrase, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," occurs only in St. Matthew iii 2; but the same message is implied in all the other Gospels. Schweitzer tries to persuade us that he believed himself sent to prepare for—not the Christ, but Elijah, who was to precede Christ. But "the mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am unworthy to stoop down and unloose," who "*shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost*" Mark i 7, 8), can be none other than the Christ.

Christ would take no account of their descent from Abraham. He demanded a holy people; and sinners in Zion, however alert their national zeal, had as good cause as in the days of Isaiah to tremble at the approach of the day of God as before devouring fire and everlasting burnings. A fundamental change of mind was needed, and John's baptism was the symbol of admission to a new Israel—a "people prepared for the Lord."

(2) It is the testimony of all the Gospels that John not only announced the immediate coming of the Kingdom and the Christ, but recognized Jesus, on the occasion of His coming to his baptism, as "the greater one" who was to come. The meagreness of Mark's narrative, till he reaches (at ver. 14) the Galilean ministry, suggests that only at that point did his special information begin. What precedes is a bare summary of what everyone knew. But his brief narrative implies that, though the vision of the opening heaven and the descending Spirit was for Jesus only, the divine voice was for John also—whether heard with his outward ear or only in his inward spirit, like the word of the Lord by the old prophets, we need not enquire—and it proclaimed Jesus the Son of God, by which was then understood, I think, neither more nor less than the Christ. This information must have been conveyed, we should suppose, by John himself to some of the first disciples; and St. Peter in the Acts represents the companionship of the apostles with one another and with the Lord Jesus as "beginning from the baptism of John."[1] There are differences in detail among the Gospels,[2] but there is a common witness which we have no reason for hesitating to accept.

But with the narrative of the Galilean ministry of Jesus, we get upon the ground of chief importance.

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[1] Acts i 21–2.

[2] See appended note p. 364.

III

If we are to do our best to judge of the impression produced by Jesus upon the first group of His disciples, and especially upon those who came closest to Him and whom He chose to be "the Twelve," we should read, at one sitting, with as fresh and free a mind as possible, ignoring difficulties of detail, the Gospel of St. Mark down to the beginning of the Passion narrative, and then, again at one sitting, the Gospel of St. Luke from the beginning of the ministry down to the Passion, and then at least the Sermon on the Mount and the Parables in St. Matthew. What follows represents my often-renewed impression of such readings, of the justice of which my readers must judge.

To speak in the most general terms, I submit that whatever previous ideas may have been in the minds of these disciples concerning the purpose of God for Israel, and concerning His kingdom and the Christ who was to come, were quite overwhelmed by a new influence or impression which threw everything else into the background—the overwhelming impression of the person of Jesus—"the Son of Man," or "the Man," as He called Himself.

I do not think it is possible to doubt (1) that the evangelists intend to convey the impression that Jesus, habitually from the beginning of His ministry, called Himself the Son of Man.[1]

(2) That He really so called Himself. Seeing that, except on one occasion, when Stephen, at the moment of his martyrdom, calls Jesus the Son of Man, with obvious reference to His own words before the Sanhedrin (Mark xiv 62), the first Christians, according

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[1] See *Beginnings*, pp. 374–7: "The opinion of the writers of the Gospels is thus clear that Jesus used the phrase; that he used it of Himself." "The writers understand Jesus to refer to Himself." So also Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, pp. 5 ff.

to the evidence, did not use this title at all, either in speaking of their Lord or in addressing Him, it seems the extreme of perversity to maintain that the attribution of the title to Jesus is due to the early community,[1] and that He probably did not in fact use the title as a designation of Himself.

(3) That, whereas after Peter's confession of His Messiahship, the title acquires in the mouth of Jesus a quite distinctive Messianic significance, it was as first used by Him plainly not intended or understood in a Messianic sense at all. For we are repeatedly told that Jesus was refusing to make any public claim to be the Messiah. The Aramaic word, translated Son of Man, would apparently have meant simply "the man." Its use by Jesus may be compared to its frequent use in the case of Ezekiel as the name by which the divine voice called him. There it signifies that he is a man, and also a man singled out for a special vocation.[2] So also in Ps. viii 4 it represents mankind viewed, as we may say, in the ideal. I suppose when our Lord first so called Himself, quite without reference to Messianic distinction or glory,[3] He meant His hearers to think of Him as "the man" in some specially representative sense, though I should shrink from such a modern-sounding phrase as "the ideal man."

The Jews were distinguished by profound reverence for their teachers, who were primarily teachers of religion, and those who heard Jesus came very speedily to regard Him as a great teacher sent from God. They were impressed at starting by the novelty of His teaching. "What is this?" men cried out. "A new teaching!"[4] Already they had heard what seemed a new teaching from John the Baptist. If in substance it was the teaching of the ancient prophets revived, yet, at least by contrast to what many generations of the people had received from their official guides, or by comparison with popular ideas about the Christ who was to come and the kingdom of God, it was very new teaching which they heard from John. And doubtless they were prepared for the like from Jesus. But what they heard—for instance in the sermon given by St. Luke, or the longer version, the " Sermon on the Mount " in St. Matthew, or the teaching about the merely relative obligation of the Sabbath, or about the new wine which could not be put into old bottles, or about sin having its seat only in the heart—the great saying of which St. Mark [1] says that it " cleansed all meats," or again our Lord's estimate of the absolute worth of every human soul—all this no doubt struck in their hearts a profounder and richer note of novelty than anything said by John the Baptist.[2]

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[1] So Bousset and Kirsopp Lake.

[2] See Ezek. ii 1, iii 1, and constantly.

[3] As in Mark ii 10, 28, Luke vii 34, ix 58, xii 10 (all from Q).

[4] Mark i 27.

Moreover, we are bound to believe that some of the disciples at least were impressed sufficiently to be able to treasure the words of Jesus—doubtless in many cases the often-repeated words—and to reproduce them accurately, with even sharp precision. This was in the Jewish schools the quite normal faculty of the pupils of any teacher.[3] We may be prepared to maintain against all comers that the reports in the Synoptic Gospels of the words of Jesus bear, with not much exception, the quite unmistakable stamp of genuineness. This, I think, must be the verdict of the literary sense. Nevertheless, it is also quite apparent that the disciples had very little intelligent perception, during our Lord's human lifetime, of His meaning. They were capable of what we cannot but call stupid misunderstandings. They were even astonishingly dense, unimaginative, and unsympathetic. It would be quite untrue, we feel as we read, to interpret the influence of Jesus upon them as the influence of His teaching upon receptive pupils. It really was not in the main the substance of His teaching that was gradually making them new men. Unmistakably it was the commanding authority of His person and their unbounded faith in Him.[1]

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[1] St. Mark vii 19.

[2] There are admirable modern accounts of the ethical teaching of our Lord, amongst which I still think *Ecce Homo* pre-eminent. But in this book I am concerned only with the estimate of our Lord's person and restrain myself from the consideration of His teaching.

[3] See *Belief in God*, pp. 191–2.

Critics of the orthodox tradition are always reproving the theologians for having overstated the prominence of the person, and the personal claim, of Jesus. "To lay down any 'doctrine' about his person and his dignity, independently of the Gospel, was quite outside his sphere of ideas."[2] "He does not talk about himself."[3] The measure of truth in such statements we shall have to consider later. But let there be no mistake. The dominant influence of Jesus upon the disciples did not lie in anything that He taught them, whether about Himself or about God or about the kingdom of God, but in "The Man" Himself—in the impression of overwhelming authority, certainly supernatural and "of God," resident in Him.

It is this that constrains them at the beginning to leave all and follow Him. It is authority which expresses itself in His works of healing, especially, but not only, the healing of the possessed. The sense of it is vividly presented to us in the case of one who was neither a disciple nor a Jew—the Roman centurion who had been paying attention to Jesus, and had gained the conviction that He occupied in nature a position comparable to his own in the army. No doubt, that is to say, He was "under authority"—the authority of God; but within the sphere of His activity He could do as He willed with nature, as the centurion could with his subordinates. "With authority He commands," and it obeys Him. He speaks, and it is done.[1] So again it is that the ruler of the synagogue falls at His feet—full of belief in His power.[2] That is the impression. His authority in working what we call miracles and what the Gospels call "powers" is paralleled by His moral authority. He taught as He worked, "as one having authority" of a divine kind in Himself. So as "the Man" He claims to forgive the sins of the paralytic and, to prove His right to do so, He heals his disease. And in teaching He does not generally, though He does at times, refer beyond Himself—"This is the word of the Lord," or "Thus saith Scripture." Even in revising the divinely-given law of Sinai, it was enough to say "But I say unto you."

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[1] Simkhovitch, *op. cit.* p. 78, has a very good passage about the difference in powerful movements which stir mankind between faith in ideas and understanding of ideas: "Do not think for a moment that it is understanding of the ideas which moves mankind; it is their faith in the ideas." With the disciples it was not even yet faith in the ideas of Jesus. It was simply a bewildered confidence in Him.

[2] Harnack, *What is Christianity?* p. 129.

[3] *Beginnings of Christianity*, p. 288.

Many moderns seem quite to underestimate or almost to ignore this overwhelming impression of authority. The disciples are being led to believe that in the physical world, though He will do nothing to help Himself, He can do anything to help those in need, or themselves, His companions. Such was doubtless the impression of His feeding of the five thousand out of so miserably inadequate a supply, or rescuing the disciples suddenly, when they roused Him out of sleep in the storm at sea. They were growing to believe that He would be equal to all the emergencies which might occur. And in the moral sphere His word was enough. They could not question it. And though He did not seem to know everything, yet

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[1] Matt. viii 5–13, Luke vii 1–10.

[2] Mark v 22.

He had a strange power of reading men's hearts; and at times He spoke as if He were the final judge of men, not only in view of their public acts but of their secret lives. In certain of the parables this assumption that He is the final judge is plain.[1] But it is implied elsewhere. We think of such a saying as "Many shall come to me in that day . . . then will I protest unto them, I never knew you."[2] Here what is implied, both in St. Matthew and St. Luke's version, is that nothing matters to a man at last except the judgment of Jesus on him, and that this judgment goes to the heart of the reality and cannot be misled by appearances or professions. So elsewhere we hear that to deny Him and be ashamed of Him here in this world means to be disowned by Him at last, and that that is the final disaster.[3] He is the ultimate judge.

There are three other kindred features in the impression which our Lord plainly made on His disciples which we shall note. He spoke as being infallible. He was indeed as far as possible from being a dogmatic teacher who loved to teach men a secret lore *ex cathedra*. There was nothing about Him of this tone. And He did not shrink from telling the disciples of something which was not within His knowledge. But whatever He did teach, He taught as if it were certainly true, and (unlike the prophets who delivered a message from God) as if the fountain of truth was in Himself. "No man knoweth the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Secondly, there was not in His language the least trace of a sense of sinfulness, or even possible unworthiness, such as has possessed at all times prophets and seers. Finally, there was an exclusiveness about His claim on men, as if He were not merely one of the representatives of God but in some profound sense the only one. He appears, indeed, to delegate to the Twelve and the Seventy authority to teach and to heal diseases, but this is in His name or in utter dependence on Him. In Himself He seems to brook no rival. "Come unto me," He says, "and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." "Follow me and let the dead bury their own dead." This sort of language seems to breathe nothing less than the divine jealousy over human souls.

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[1] So most dramatically in Matt. xxv 31. I know that St. Matthew seems at times to heighten the Messianic colouring of our Lord's sayings. But I agree with Sanday (*The Life of Christ in Recent Research*, p. 128, note 1) that it is "wanton" to doubt this parable. See also the Tares, Matt. xiii 41, and the Talents, Luke xix 11 and Matt. xxv 14. Dr. Rashdall, *Conscience and Christ*, p. 48, seeks to substantiate the doubt whether our Lord ever spoke of Himself as the actual judge. But the witness that He did is not only St. Matthew's.

[2] Matt. vii 22; cf. Luke xiii 24 ff., which is vivid and clear in its implication.

[3] Mark viii 38, Luke ix 26, Matt. x 33; cf. Luke xxi 36 "To stand before the Son of Man."

Now all this time questions were pending in the minds of the disciples as to who He was. There was some secret, some mystery, about His person.

The report of the divine voice at the baptism, the story of the temptation in the wilderness which Jesus must at some time have communicated to them, the strange cries of the demoniacs "Thou art the Son of God—the holy one of God," and their horror of Him as of some awful power, and also certain solemn and hardly intelligible words of His own, made them conscious of a mystery. There were names, "Son of Man," "Son of God," "Christ," which were in their ears and would have to be explained. But while all this process of questioning was going on, something deeper was happening. Beyond all possibility of question, and seemingly by His own deliberate intention, Jesus, so far as they yielded their faith to Him, was taking the place of God, or in modern phrase gaining "the values of God," for their souls. Not all the values of God. They did not, I suppose, at that time dream of Him as the creator of the world and the ruler of the course of nature. No doubt they thought of Him as wholly under God. But within the sphere of their personal lives, He had been growing to have to them the values of God, as the object of their absolute faith, their infallible refuge and informer and protector and guide.

This seems to me quite an irresistible impression. There is an old saying of unknown origin—either Jesus Christ was God or He was not a good man—which critics sometimes treat with great derision. I do not think it can be so derided. There is more in it than they seem to recognize. How could men be in the constant companionship of the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels—such as we have been seeking to describe Him, surely without exaggeration—without coming to be in the attitude towards Him which is only legitimate towards God? And was He not deliberately encouraging, and bringing about this attitude towards Himself in their souls? Did He not exhibit the sort of exclusive claim which suggests nothing else but the "jealousy" of God? And is it not the supreme sin of pride or arrogance for any man, even a commissioned prophet, to allow himself to assume this exclusive position? Must not every commissioned servant be always crying "Send, O Lord, by whom thou wilt send! Thou hast many messengers and all of them subject to error and weakness, I most of all"? The implication of infallible, exclusive authority which seems to inhere in the words and tone of Jesus does seem to me to express, if not the jealousy of God, then some such quality as lies at the heart of all spiritual tyranny and false sacerdotalism.

IV

We have now to consider the question of the person of Jesus from another point of view, that is, of the titles by which He was called or by which He called Himself. I have argued that if we regard the Synoptic Gospels as giving us good history, we must also regard it as certain that John the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the Christ who was to come, and did so, in part at least, on the ground of a divine voice heard at the baptism of Jesus proclaiming Him "the beloved (or more probably 'the only') Son in whom God had found satisfaction." The record of the baptism as given in the Gospels would have come, we should suppose, from John. Whether "the voice," either on this occasion or at the Transfiguration, was one which an indifferent by-stander would have heard with his ears, or whether it came, like "the word of the Lord" to the prophets, only to the spiritual hearing, we need not discuss, any more than the question whether the narrative of the temptation, which I suppose our Lord related to the Twelve, is intended as an allegoric expression of events which happened only in Christ's consciousness or as a record of outward events.[1] In either case it is certain that Jesus was believed by Himself and by John to have been divinely certified at His baptism as the Son of God, and the temptation of Jesus involved His consciousness that He was so.[2] So says the only story we have of His childhood—the scene in the Temple when He was twelve years old—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business," or "in my Father's house." It follows that those who received the testimony of John and Jesus believed Him to be truly, in some sense, the Son of God, and when they heard the demoniacs so hailing Him and heard Jesus seeking to silence them, they must have felt that there was mystery attaching to this title; but on the whole, they probably simply identified it in meaning with the Christ, the king of David's line in whom God's promises to Israel were to be fulfilled, neither more nor less. It would not appear that till St. Paul comes on the scene the Church generally realized its full significance.[1] It is true that there is no evidence of the title Son of God being used in the later Jewish literature of the Christ, but it was twice used of the Son of David or of David in the Psalms[2] and of the righteous man in the Book of Wisdom,[3] and the evidence appears to be conclusive that the disciples took it as meaning the Christ.[4]

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[1] Though, for myself, I can feel no doubt (with Origen) that the former is the true interpretation; see *Epistles of St. John*, pp. 236–7.

[2] I see no sign whatever in the Gospels of any advance in our Lord's estimate of His own person. This idea, which is constantly asserted, as if it were to be taken for granted, may or may not be open to theological objection, but the question need not be raised. There is no evidence. The word of God at the baptism, "In thee I have found satisfaction" (*εὐδόκησα*) certainly does not support the idea that the moment of baptism made any difference to His Sonship. The "Western" reading of St. Luke iii 22, "Thou art my son; on this day have I begotten thee," is surely due to a reminiscence of Ps. ii. 7. (See further *Can We then Believe*, p. 181.)

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[1] See later, pp. 374 ff.

[2] Ps. ii (which is treated as Messianic in the Psalms of Solomon) verses 7 and (perhaps) 12, and lxxxix 26–7. See Dalman's *Words of Jesus* (Eng. trans.), pp. 268 ff.

[3] Wisdom ii 16, 18.

[4] So it appears to have been understood when the demoniacs hailed Him by the title "Son of God," in Mark iii 11, v 7; cf. Matt. viii 29, Luke viii 28: "He suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him"—*i.e.* knew Him as Christ; cf. Luke iv 41, where, after the exclamation "Thou art the Son of God," is the explanation "They knew that he was the Christ." So at the trial, Matt. xxvi 63, and parallels in Mark and Luke; and when our Lord is mocked upon the Cross (see Matt. xxvii 40–3; cf. Mark xv 32). St. Matthew seems to represent the disciples as identifying "Son of God" with Christ in the confession of Peter, xvi 15. The same appears to be the representation of John i 49. The "King of Israel" is the synonym for "the Son of God." In Mark i 1, on the other hand, "Son of God" probably has the fuller meaning Mark had come to attach to it.

This, however, is by no means true of the sense in which our Lord used it of Himself. The great passage, " No one knoweth the Son save the Father : neither doth any know the Father save the Son," which occurs in both St. Matthew and St. Luke, and with its wonderful context is authentic beyond reasonable dispute, asserts a relationship of mutual knowledge between Father and Son which suggests something essential and eternal.[1] So the phrase " Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son," [2] which again must surely be authentic, because no later believer would have attributed such limitation of knowledge to the Christ, suggests at least a super-angelic sonship. Once more in the parable of the husbandmen Jesus distinguishes Himself as the only Son sharply from all the other messengers of God.[3] As I have said, it would not appear as if these utterances made much impression at the time. The thoughts of the disciples were confined to the question, Is he the Christ ? But they have survived among our Lord's most indisputable words, and they seem to me to bear beyond question the sense of a sonship unique, superhuman and essential. There is not really much difference between what they involve and what is taught in the discourses of St. John.

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[1] Matt. xi 27, Luke x 22. See Dalman, pp. 283, 285: " But in this case of mutual understanding, its thoroughness [*i.e.* the thoroughness of mutual knowledge] and absolute infallibility are assumed. He who stands in so uniquely close a relation to God is the only possible mediator of the kind, and also at the same time the absolutely reliable revealer of the whole wealth of the divine mysteries." . . . " The passages appear to imply that Jesus had shown no cognizance of any beginning in this relationship. It seems to be an innate property of His personality." See also Harnack, *Sayings of Jesus* (Eng. trans., Williams and Norgate), p. 302. " A formal likeness of Father and Son, who are distinguished only by the different names, and a relationship of Father and Son which never had a beginning, but remains ever the same," is here expressed. This is unacceptable to Harnack and, quite arbitrarily, he omits part of the text. Other writers make the whole passage the work of a later Jewish Christian prophet, basing himself on Ecclus. li 1, 23, 26, 27. But this sort of criticism can dissolve any evidence. I shall recur to the passage later (see pp. 385 f, 405 f).

We notice that our Lord never speaks to the disciples of " our Father," except in giving them for their use the Lord's Prayer. He speaks of " your Father," or " the Father," and of " my Father." This appears with express emphasis in John xx 17. But it is apparent also in the Synoptists.

[2] Mark xiii 32 and Matt. xxiv 36 (R.V.).

[3] Mark xii 6 ; also Matthew and Luke.

It is profoundly characteristic of what I have called our Lord's undogmatic method that He should have uttered these solemn sayings—which seem to open out such momentous glimpses into the mystery of His personality—only, as it were, incidentally and without explanation, and left them as germs to fertilize later in men's minds. So with regard to His being the Christ, though in that case there were many suggestions from without, He chose that the conviction should mature in the minds of the Twelve and become a confession of their own lips, not something dictated to them by Him. Thus, under circumstances of deepening anxiety, and near a city the very name of which—Caesarea Philippi—spoke of alien and foreign influences repugnant to the heart of every Jew, He asked them the question, " Who do men say that I am ? " and then pressed home upon them the more searching question, " But who do ye say that I am ? " and Peter replied with the great confession, " Thou art the Christ." It was a decisive moment, and it strikes us as most natural that our Lord should have signalized the greatness of the moment by meeting the confession with the solemn and rich benediction which Matthew alone records : " Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for this is not anything thou hast learnt by human influence. It is a real disclosure made by my heavenly Father in thy soul. It is a conviction wrought in thee by God."

Henceforth, though the world is not at present to know it, the secret that Jesus is the Christ is an open secret in the apostolic company, and Jesus proceeds at once to build upon it in the way most calculated to test them and terrify them. "From that time began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and the third day be raised up." This prophecy is made "openly" and repeated again and again.[1] The ideas suggested were profoundly contrary to the vague and elastic, but always glorious and radiant, ideas of the Messianic king which the Jews, and the disciples amongst them, entertained. They had all along had cause for anxiety as to whether the crowds drawn by the "powers" and by the words of their Master were the prelude to His real triumph. It was quite plain that there was a wide interval between welcoming His words and wonderful benefits and really obeying from the heart His searching doctrine. Of the latter there was no sign on any large scale. And the leaders of the nation appeared to be all against Him. Nevertheless there had been something radiant and triumphant about their earlier experiences with Him in Galilee. Nothing less is implied in the description which Jesus gave of His company, in explanation of their having no special fasts of their own, such as the Pharisees had, and John's disciples. He compared them to a happy band of friends round a bridegroom in the moment of his joy and triumph. No doubt He struck the note of loss and sorrow to come—"The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them"—but the present scenery is painted in radiant colours.[2] It might be a fitting prelude for the glorious days of the Messiah. But anxiety had deepened; and now, just when they had given full expression to their faith that He verily was the Christ, He let the blow fall upon them in all its weight, and drove it down upon them again and again. The way of the Christ was to be the way of the Cross, the way of failure and death. And Peter's impulsive protest brought upon him the sternest rebuke "Get thee behind me, Satan!"

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[1] Mark viii 31, ix 12, 31, x 33–4. [2] Mark ii 18 ff.; cf. John iii 29.

We cannot doubt that this profound change in the idea of the Christ was effected by our Lord's identifying Himself, the Son of Man, with the Suffering Servant of Jehovah in the later Isaiah. In these wonderful chapters (Is. xl onward) "the servant of Jehovah" is first Israel in general (xli 8 f.), and then apparently the select remnant of the people, who alone are the true Israel (xlix 1–3), through whom alone the purpose of God can realize itself. But though no doubt the prophet begins by using "the Servant" as a personification of the nation or group within the nation, yet he appears to be carried away as he contemplates the Servant to think of him as a real person who is by his obedience and his undeserved sufferings and death to win the redemption of "the many." We feel this already in earlier passages,[1] but the impression becomes overwhelming in the familiar passage (lii 13 and liii), which sounds to us for the most part, as we hear it, as simply the history of the passion of Jesus written beforehand. I will present the passage in Dr. Driver's careful analysis[2]:

The preface in cap. lii 13–15 describes "the ideal servant's exaltation after an antecedent period of humiliation and distress." Then this is developed in cap. liii. The first part (1–9) presents "three several stages in the ideal Servant's humiliation: the persons speaking are the Israelites, represented as at length perceiving the truth to which they had before been blind, and reviewing the period of their incredulity. First, in spite of the prophetic report, or message, pointing to him, few or none, they say, amongst his nation recognized him: he had no outward grace, or beauty of form, attracting attention; he grew up in their midst like some mean or lowly shrub, struggling to maintain itself in an arid soil: men despised him, and even held aloof from him in aversion. In truth, however," [so they proceed to confess], they themselves were the occasion of his distressed appearance: "he was bearing the consequences of our sins, although we in our blindness imagined him to be stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted"—*i.e.* smitten, as by a divine judgment, for some heinous offence—"whereas, in fact, it was we who had gone astray, and the penalty, instead of recoiling upon us, lighted in its entirety upon him. So far from being guilty himself, he bore the guilt of others and relieved them of its penal consequences. Though he suffered willingly, and made no answer to his accusers, he was still oppressed: first imprisoned by an unjust sentence, he was afterwards led away to execution, not one among his contemporaries considering that he was thus cut off, not for his own sins, but for those of the people. In spite of the innocence of his life, his death was that of a malefactor and his end inglorious."

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[1] *E.g.* l 4–10.

[2] *Isaiah, his Life and Times* (Nisbet), pp. 152–5, very slightly abbreviated.

[The final paragraph, however, reverses the character of the scene and introduces the promise for the future.] "It was Jehovah's pleasure thus to bruise him: but out of death will spring a new life: after his soul has been made a guilt offering, he will live again, enjoy long life, and be rewarded with the satisfaction of seeing God's work, or 'pleasure' prosper in his hand. Possessed of an intimate 'knowledge' of the dealings and purposes of God, he will 'justify the many,' whilst his final reward for having submitted to the death of a transgressor will be that he will be ranked as a conqueror and honoured among the great ones of the earth: inasmuch as 'he bore the sins of the many and made intercession for the transgressors.'"

This astonishing vision of the prophet appears to have made little or no permanent impression on the imagination of Israel.[1] Its idea of kingship quite escaped them. They never identified the glorious Messiah with the Suffering Servant. This was the work of Jesus. Some modern critics have ventured to doubt whether Jesus shows the influence of this prophecy. But, I think, quite unreasonably. Two points seem to prove it :—(1) that our Lord plainly regards the sufferings of the Christ and His death as necessary because prefigured in Scripture.[2] "How is it written of the Son of Man ?" "The Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him." "How, then, should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be ?" And the same intense conviction of prophecy and fulfilment appears in the earliest Church,[3] and it appears from the beginning associated with the figure of the "servant of Jehovah."[4] Indeed it could hardly have been otherwise, for, though the Old Testament may provide types and suggestions of the idea of a suffering Christ, it contains nothing which can be compared with Isaiah liii in vividness and impressiveness.

(2) Our Lord seems plainly to identify Himself with "the Servant," when He quotes from the "Servant" section of Isaiah to interpret His mission at Nazareth,[5] and St. Luke also represents Him

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[1] It left apparent traces on certain psalms and on the books of Job and Maccabees (see below, pp. 581 f), but it never became recognized for its importance in the Jewish tradition. In the *Targum* on Is. liii, which has recently been translated by the late R. A. Aytoun (see *J.T.S.*, Jan. 1922, pp. 179–80), the Servant is interpreted of the Messiah, but, by a violent perversion of the sense of the passage, all the marks of ignominy and shame are diverted from him upon his people and his adversaries. This is a most curious document.

[2] Mark ix 12, cf. Matt. xxvi 24, 54, 56, Luke xviii 31, xxiv 25–7, 46.

[3] 1 Cor. xv 3, Acts ii 23, xvii 2–3, xxvi 22–3, 1 Peter i 10–11.

[4] See Acts iii 13 "His servant Jesus," and 26, and iv 27, 30 "Thy holy servant Jesus." So Philip expounds to the eunuch, viii 31 ff. So 1 Peter ii 21 ff. and Matt. viii 17.

[5] Luke iv 18, from Is. lxi. Driver is surely right in representing these words as put in the mouth of the Servant.

as quoting of His own end the words concerning the Servant, "He was reckoned with transgressors."[1] But perhaps more convincing in their originality are the two passages in St. Mark where our Lord speaks of Himself as to give His life a "ransom *for many*," and of the cup, at the Last Supper, as "this is my blood of the covenant which is shed *for many*."[2] It does not seem to me to be doubtful that this "for many," twice repeated, is a reference to Isaiah liii. "My righteous servant shall justify *many*." "He bare the sin of *many*."[3] This is all the more noticeable because the significance of the precise word does not seem to have been perceived, so that it has vanished from the versions of St. Luke and St. Paul.

Our Lord then, who was plainly set radically to revise the conception of the Christ, and who, though He did not disclaim His Davidic descent, yet was manifestly anxious not to emphasize it,[4] deeply involved as it was in ideas of temporal sovereignty, sought to effect His purpose by identifying the Christ, as no one had done before Him,[5] with the Suffering Servant, and that by associating both with the title He had chosen for Himself—the Son of Man or the Man. Henceforth the Man, the Christ, and the Suffering Servant are the same person. And one more step had to be taken to complete our Lord's profoundly new doctrine of the Christ, and that was, as the sequel to suffering and death, to

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[1] Luke xxii 37.

[2] Mark x 45, xiv 24; so also in St. Matthew, cf. Heb. ix 28, Rom. v 15.

[3] Is. liii 11, 12. In the LXX the word πολλοῖς, πολλούς, πολλῶν recurs three times. Also as one reads the LXX of Is. liii 12—παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον—it is difficult to doubt that this phrase promoted the constant use of this verb in connection with our Lord's betrayal and surrender to death.

[4] On our Lord's Davidic descent as a real fact, see Dalman, *op. cit.* pp. 316 ff.

[5] Unless, indeed, John the Baptist: see John i 29.

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introduce in a new form, what was already suggested in Isaiah liii, the idea of resurrection and glory. In a new form—for He identified the Christ with the figure of glorified manhood in the visions of Daniel.

The passage has been already quoted and its original sense explained. It is an image of the people of God, by the side of the world-empires imaged in the four great beasts—"And I saw in the night visions, and behold there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the Ancient of Days. . . . And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all the people, nations and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Now, I have already explained how probably before our Lord's time, in the Similitudes of the Book of Enoch, this figure of the chosen people was converted into the figure of a heavenly being, "The Elect One," pre-existing in the heavens, who at the end of the world was to be manifested in glory as the agent of divine judgment, seated on the very throne of God. This being, first described as in countenance like a man and possibly called "The Son of Man,"[1] is the "Anointed One," and, as one may say, is a substitute for the old prophetic Messiah. This is a truer expression than to say He is identified with the Messiah, for He has no connection with any earthly son of David in the imagination of the Apocalyptic writer. Now I have insisted that it must be regarded as certain that "The Son of Man" was *not* a term which for the crowd or the disciples carried with it Messianic associations when our Lord first used it. It was our Lord who first for them identified the Son of Man both with the Suffering Servant and with the Christ, the Son of

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[1] For doubts on this subject see above, p. 327 f.

David. But I think it is most probable that the Book of Enoch had already interpreted the human figure in Daniel as being—not an image of the nation, but a mysterious person, who is to be manifested in the clouds as God's vice-gerent in judgment at the end of the world, and had given this interpretation of Daniel such currency that our Lord can use it as a means of extending the meaning of His own title, the Son of Man, and giving to the conception of the Christ its new meaning.[1]

We had better have before us the Pharisee's conception of the Christ to come and the Apocalyptic conception of the Son of Man, that we may see how our Lord both fused and remodelled them.

We take the Psalms of Solomon, dating from a Pharisaic source about a generation before our Lord's birth, and in the 17th Psalm we find this account of the Christ :

> "Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king, the Son of David, at the time which thou sawest, O God, that he may reign over Israel, thy servant, and gird him with strength that he may shatter unrighteous rulers. Purge Jerusalem from nations that trample her down to destruction. . . . He will not suffer unrighteousness to lodge any more in the midst of his people ; nor shall there dwell with them any man that knoweth wickedness ; for he shall know them, that they are all sons of their God, and he shall distribute them in their tribes upon the earth, and no sojourner or foreigner shall sojourn any more among them." [2]

This is the old prophetic vision, only without any of the wide hope which is found in many of the old prophets for all the nations of the earth. There is in this Psalm nothing but destruction for the heathen.

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[1] It must be remembered that on all showing the Jewish Messianic ideas were confused and vague. Our Lord seems first to have given them spiritual coherence.

[2] Psalms of Solomon, xvii 23–5, 29–31.

And the method of the Christ-King is to be the method of the ruthless conqueror. We have seen already how utterly our Lord repudiated any such conception of the office of the Christ, and both profoundly spiritualized and universalized the conception of the Kingdom. He went back to the noblest form of the ancient vision, and far beyond it.

Then let us take the Apocalyptic conception of the Elect One from the Similitudes of Enoch, based manifestly on the vision of the Book of Daniel.

> " And there I saw one who had a head of days, and His head was white like wool, and with Him was another being whose countenance had the appearance of a man, and his face was full of graciousness like one of the holy angels. And I asked the angel who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, concerning that Son of Man, who he was, and whence he was, and why he went with the Head of Days. And he answered and said unto me: This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness, with whom dwelleth righteousness, and who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden. . . . And this Son of Man whom thou hast seen . . . shall loosen the loins of the strong and break the teeth of the sinners . . . and darkness shall be their dwelling, and worms shall be their bed . . . because they do not extol the name of the Lord of spirits." " At that hour the Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and his name before the Head of Days. . . . He shall be the staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall, and he shall be the light of the Gentiles, and the hope of those who are troubled in heart. . . . And he hath been chosen and hidden before Him, before the creation of the world and for evermore." " And he sat on the throne of his glory, and the sum of judgment was given unto the Son of Man, and he caused the sinners to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth, and those who have led the world astray." [1]

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[1] The Book of Enoch (Dr. Charles's translation), xlvi, xlviii 2, 4, 6, lxix 27.

If this, as seems probable, is really a writing which dates before the time of our Lord, and the passages just quoted are, as a whole, not Christian interpolations,[1] which again seems probable, we need not doubt that this interpretation of Daniel's "one like unto a son of man," who came with the clouds of heaven and was brought near to the Ancient of Days and given universal and everlasting dominion and glory and a kingdom,[2] was known to our Lord and used by Him. But He transformed completely the whole basis of the conception of the "Elect One," who in Enoch is a purely celestial figure, angelic rather than human. In our Lord's use of the figure, he is first of all the man born of a woman and living the human life among His fellows; then the suffering "Servant of Jehovah," who wins redemption for the many by the sacrifice of His life; and so only passes to resurrection and glory and the awful dignity of the judge of the world. It is on this basis that the note of resurrection and glory and power is sounded in the ears of the disciples, side by side with the note of suffering. "The third day he shall rise again." And they are to "see the Son of Man coming in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."[3]

This, then, is the conclusion of our enquiry. The conception of the Messiah which Jesus caused to grow in the minds of the disciples was profoundly original in the sense that it took up all the elements of ancient prophecy and recent interpretation, and combined them in a whole in His own person—in a whole which, while it realized their best spirit, was quite remote from the expectations of His contemporaries. According to Jesus' teaching, the Messiahship had its basis in His humble and patient manhood, and it was to have its centre in His rejection and suffering and crucifixion, and its vindication in His resurrection and in the mission of His Spirit (for the resurrection of the dead and the effusion of the Spirit were, as we have seen, elements in the ancient prophecies of the Messianic days), and it was to find its consummation in His Lordship in heaven and in His coming to judge the quick and dead.

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[1] See Dalman, *op. cit.* p. 243: "A Christian interpolator should above all things have made it clear in some way that the Son of Man coming in judgment was Jesus of Nazareth. But the Son of Man in this case appears never to have been upon earth, far less to have passed through the state of death." See, however, above p. 327, for the title Son of Man.

[2] Dan. vii 13–14.

[3] Mark viii 31, 38, xiv 62. On the eschatological teaching of our Lord and the question of its relation to reality see at length pp. 432 ff.

But in spite of the special help given to them in the vision of the Transfiguration, the disciples had at present no ears for the note of glory beyond humiliation and through it. They could only attend to the announcements of utter shame and rejection and death. Not only did He speak to them of His own death, but of the death of their national hopes. He told them quite plainly that Jerusalem was doomed,[1] and that their city and temple would be destroyed; and He bade them accept this utter seeming failure, both of Him, their Master, and of all that their patriotic hearts held dear, as something inevitable and necessary for the kingdom to come.[2] It was too much for them. It stirred in their minds a despondency and repulsion which overcame even their loyalty and their faith in Him.

There is hardly any tragedy in history which moves us more than the failure of the disciples. But it was a temporary tragedy. Their failure became an element in their strength and power. Their faith in Jesus lived again, and took form and glory after their recovery, and in the next chapter we shall trace its course. What we have done so far is to recognize that, quite apart from their ideas about the person of Jesus their Master, which were no doubt vague and uncertain, quite apart even from the new conception of the Christ which Jesus had planted in their reluctant souls to bear fruit after their temporary failure, there was another and deeper impression which they could not shake off. They had been keeping company with one who, deliberately as it seemed, had come to occupy towards their souls a place of authority which is practically God's place. He had come to have for them the values of God. We can conceive nothing further from the method of Jesus than that He should have startled and shocked their consciences by proclaiming Himself as God. But He had done something which in the long run would make any other estimate of Him hardly possible.

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[1] On this see below, pp. 442 ff.

[2] Luke xxi 28.

NOTE (to p. 341)

On the Relation of John the Baptist to Jesus

We need not dwell upon the small differences of detail between the first three evangelists in their accounts of the circumstances of the baptism of Jesus and His recognition by John as the Christ. But the Fourth Gospel makes a great deal of John's testimony to Jesus as the Son of God, by which he appears to mean simply the Christ (see i 8, 26, 32–5, iii 22–30, v 33, x 41). John is also there represented as calling Him "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," thus identifying Him with the Suffering Servant of Jehovah of Is. liii; and it alone records, what is very interesting, that some five of the apostles had been previously disciples of John and had been directed by John to Jesus, and had in some sense become His disciples then and there, and had acknowledged Him for the Christ (John i 35–51), and had had some profound experiences of Him before the end of John's ministry and before their call to be "fishers of men" (John ii and iii 22–24). I do not think all this is at all impossible. As Dr. Holland points out,[1] their early confession that Jesus was the Christ, or "the Son of God, the King of Israel," was an echo of the popular Jewish hope which their subsequent experience obliterated, so that they had to rediscover His Messiahship in a quite new sense. Nor do I see anything improbable in John having, perhaps first among the Jews, identified the Suffering Servant with the Christ. I think we have in these additions to the story of the Synoptists genuine memories. See Burney, *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*, pp. 104 ff.

It is worth noticing that the record of the divine voice at the baptism is given by all the Synoptists as "This is," or "Thou art my beloved son in whom I have found satisfaction." This makes it plain that none of them regard the Sonship as dating from the baptism, though I think that to the consciousness of John (but not to that of Jesus), as to the rest of the Jews, the term at that time meant no more and no less than the Christ. This idea of the Christ must have come from Ps. ii 7 and lxxxix 26.

As a result of his preaching and baptism "the disciples of John" appear to have constituted a distinctive fraternity, whom John bound together by special rules. He taught them to pray and to observe fasts, and "on some points of ceremonial he may have had tenets of his own" (see Luke xi 1, v 33; John iii 15; cf. Acts xviii 25, xix 3–4; and see Latham's *Pastor Pastorum*, p. 155). But it does not appear clearly in the Acts how much they understood "concerning Jesus."

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[1] In *The Philosophy of Faith and the Fourth Gospel* (Murray, 1921), pp. 172 ff.

CHAPTER III

THE FAITH OF THE FIRST CHURCH AND OF ST. PAUL

It would seem that all the effort of Jesus was directed, in the latter part of His ministry, to the training of the Twelve, and especially to the preparation of their minds to welcome the principle of sacrifice, and withstand the shock of the Cross.[1] Crucifixion in the Roman provinces was an exceedingly common punishment. The spectacle of men bearing the cross-beam to their place of punishment would have been familiar enough. But to the heart of the Jewish nation it must have been the symbol of subjection and ignominy. And to the natural heart of the disciples the course which Jesus, whom they had confessed to be the Christ, had, as it appeared, so deliberately chosen, seemed doubtless an intolerable betrayal. There was, indeed, at the last hour one moment of seeming triumph; for Jesus, who was so reluctant to figure as the Son of David, because of the false associations of royalty implied in the title, accepted it from the blind beggar Bartimaeus on His way to Jerusalem, and later consented to be hailed as King by a mixed crowd, in a momentary fit of enthusiasm, at His entry into Jerusalem.[1] And if the cleansing of the temple occurred immediately afterwards,[2] that was another triumph, which would have raised the spirits of the disciples. It would have seemed for the moment as if He was now going to assert His power. But this brief elevation of spirits was followed by the warnings of immediate betrayal and death, and it became plain that not all that Jesus could do had availed at all to inspire into the disciples' minds the acceptance of the Cross.

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[1] Crucifixion was the ordinary Roman punishment for persons supposed to be dangerous to the Empire, see Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, i, p. 528. After the death of Herod the Great Josephus (*B.J.* ii v 3) tells us that Varus crucified 2000 rioters at one time, cf. ii xii 6, xiii 2, xiv 9; also (v xi 1) that, at the destruction of Jerusalem, the crucifixions inflicted by Titus were so constant and numerous that there was neither room for the crosses nor wood to make them.

There is no tragedy in history more moving than the rejection of Christ—all the more that it was not due to any extraordinary wickedness in the Jews or the Romans, but to the ordinary motives of men. In the Sadducean family of Annas it was due to the selfish determination to uphold by all means their own precarious position of authority, dignity and wealth, under the Roman sovereignty, and to suppress every movement that might make the Romans jealous; in the Pharisees, to their refusal, at the bidding of one who was in their eyes the merest layman, to acknowledge profound mistakes, and to think over again from the beginning what was the meaning of the religion of which they were the orthodox representatives; in the mass of the people to their worldly preoccupation of mind and their stubborn nationalism, which made them entertain wild hopes, and blinded them to the spiritual "way" of redemption which Jesus presented to them; in Pilate, to the refusal to do what very few Roman governors would have dreamed of doing—to prefer abstract justice, in the case of an impotent individual, to the apparent interests of the Empire and himself.

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[1] I cannot but think that St. John's explanation of the fit of enthusiasm by the excitement due to the raising of Lazarus (xii 9–19) is the only explanation of it which makes it at the moment intelligible. In the Synoptists taken alone it appears unaccountable.

[2] St. John, however, puts it at the beginning of the ministry. I think it is not improbable that it occurred twice.

Such refusals and obsessions are all around us every day. They constitute the common atmosphere of society, certainly in our own time as much as of old. The mind of the ecclesiastical authorities, as exhibited in Church history towards "unauthorized" prophets, constantly recalls the Pharisees. The attitude of politicians and men of business and governing classes towards moral principles constantly recalls the Sadducees and Pilate. The attitude of popular movements constantly recalls "the common people" of Jerusalem and Galilee. It is *the* tragedy of human life from the point of view of the believer in God. God comes unto His own and His own receive Him not.

And if the most tragic feature in the whole situation is the failure of the Twelve—if we can hardly bear to read the story of Peter's denial—yet we must not be scornful. The doctrine which they were required to embrace was a very new one—contrary always to flesh and blood, but to none so contrary as to the Jews. It is not easy to realize the depth of the requirement which our Lord made upon His disciples' hearts and minds when He bade them not only contemplate His own seeming failure and death, but also anticipate the doom which He so solemnly pronounced upon their nation and city and temple, and be prepared to witness its accomplishment even with joy, as the necessary prelude of the kingdom of God.[1] No one, Jew or Gentile, can know his own mind or the mind of men and women in general without recognizing that the real strain on faith lies in the spectacle of the present seeming weakness of God and of good, which no prospect of future reversal seems able to counterbalance. Truly God "delivers His strength into captivity and His glory into the enemies' hands." [2]

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[1] Luke xxi 28–31.

[2] Ps. lxxviii 61 (Bible version). The reference is to the capture of the Ark of God. Our Prayer Book version, "*their* power . . . and *their* beauty," is a mistake.

I

But a few weeks after the crucifixion and entombment of Jesus, the company of "the brethren," numbering one hundred and twenty persons, and centering upon the Twelve, are presented to us in the beginning of the Acts in a wholly different frame of mind. They are now radiant and confident, and are prepared to face an even world-wide mission, apparently of a most desperate kind, and to challenge the world, with a clear understanding at least of the ground of their mission. I have contended in the volume which preceded this,[1] that nothing can satisfactorily account for their sudden, complete and corporate change of mind, except a certain series of facts, some of which are recorded in detail by the Evangelists, and which are summarized at an earlier date by St. Paul [2]—that is the finding of the tomb of Jesus empty on the third day, and His repeated appearances afterwards, with a humanity strangely changed in physical condition, but still the same—which had assured them, beyond possibility of mistake, of His actual resurrection from the dead. On the fortieth day after the Resurrection St. Luke records that these appearances came to an end with the Ascension,[3] which after another ten days was followed by the promised effusion of the Holy Spirit. I do not propose to go again over the ground of the

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[1] *Belief in God*, pp. 262 ff.

[2] Edward Meyer, *Ursprung*, pp. 11–12, writes: "The bodily resurrection of Jesus and His numerous appearances before the disciples belong to the oldest traditions and those that were earliest fixed in a definite formula. Paul received this formula after his conversion in his period of instruction (Lehrzeit), and reproduced it in 1 Cor. xv. . . . That Paul says 'Kephas' not 'Peter' is a proof that the formula . . . was originally composed in Aramaic."

[3] There seems to me to be no adequate ground for the assumption of Meyer (*op. cit.*, vol. i. pp. 40 ff.) that the narrative of the Ascension is an interpolation.

"evidences" of these events having actually occurred. Without in any way blinding ourselves to difficulties or discrepancies of detail between our authorities—such as occur in all original testimonies by ordinary people, unless they have been artificially rectified—I do not think that it is possible either to reject them or to call them doubtful. It seems to me psychologically certain that such a rapid, simultaneous conversion of such unimaginative men as we know the Twelve to have been from the state of mind as described in the Gospels, both before and after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, to the state of mind described in the beginning of the Acts, could not have occurred except by the impact of indisputable facts of experience, such as those to which they attributed their newly-won convictions.

Nor do I propose to recur to the question of the Lucan authorship and trustworthiness of the Acts of the Apostles. Some critics hold that in the earlier chapters (i–xii) St. Luke is dependent upon Aramaic documents. Dr. Burkitt has recently suggested that St. Mark's narrative may originally have extended over the period covered by them.[1] We can leave these questions aside as doubtful. What we are not justified in doubting is that, in his intercourse with Philip the Evangelist and Mnason, the "original" disciple, and some of the women of the apostolic company, and no doubt others at Caesarea and at Jerusalem, and with John Mark in Rome during St. Paul's imprisonment there—John Mark who had probably lived through all those early days in his mother's house at Jerusalem where the apostolic company assembled—Luke had excellent opportunities for knowing the facts with sufficient accuracy to enable him to write trustworthy history. In Rackham's *Acts* we have a very careful and thoughtful study of these early chapters. To my mind, one of the most convincing assurances of their trustworthiness lies in the exact account given of the nature of the early belief in Jesus. St. Luke published his record at least not earlier than St. Paul's release from his first captivity. He had been St. Paul's trusted companion through the period when he was writing his epistles. He must have been quite familiar with St. Paul's full doctrine of Christ, and of justification and salvation in the Church which is His Body. I do not indeed see any signs that St. Luke assimilated St. Paul's theology very deeply—he was a historian with a vivid perception of the beauties of moral character, rather than a theologian, we should suppose; but he gives us touches of Paul's theology in the speeches in the latter part of the Acts. As we shall see, it is St. Paul who first in the record of the Acts calls Jesus the Son of God[1]; it is St. Paul who talks about justification by faith, as distinguished from works of the law[2]; it is St. Paul who talks about "the Church of God which he purchased with his own blood."[3] The circumstances of these speeches, as the Acts records them, do not give much opportunity for the characteristic Pauline theology. They consist of St. Paul's first approaches to Jewish and Gentile hearers, and of his *apologia pro vita sua* to the Jews and to the Church. But some of his characteristic phrases are there. Whereas in the earlier part of the Acts they are quite absent. This is very noticeable. It indicates that St. Luke had good authorities for the early speeches he records and did not write at random; thus we can approach the first part of the Acts with reasonable confidence to see how it represents the primitive belief.

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[1] *Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus* (Constable, 1910), p. 79. "It may be well to remind ourselves that we do not know how far the narrative (of Mark) extended over the ground covered by St. Luke's *Acts of the Apostles*. The first half of the work ends with the name of 'John who was surnamed Mark,' and it is plausible to suppose it may have been in the work of Mark that the third Evangelist came across the life-like episode of Rhoda." Certainly, however, Papias' description of Mark's record does not suggest this larger scope.

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[1] Acts ix 20, cf. xiii 32. It is singular that in the Acts as a whole there is actually no mention of God as Father except in Acts i 4, 7 (the words of the risen Jesus) and Acts ii 33, where Peter refers to this promise.

[2] xiii 39.

[3] xx 28.

The disciples, as represented especially by their leader St. Peter, are set before us as simply filled with the thoughts forced upon them by the Resurrection and later by the effusion of the Holy Spirit. The central thought is that of the Lordship of Jesus the Christ. Though God certified His mission "by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of Israel," yet Israel had crucified and slain Him by the hands of the Romans. But now God had vindicated Him by the Resurrection and exalted Him by His right hand and to His right hand; and it was He who had poured forth the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, which He received from the Father. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God made him both Lord and Christ,[1] this Jesus whom ye crucified."

So far as appears in the Acts, Peter raised no question concerning the divine Sonship or pre-existence of Jesus.[2] He is content throughout, as in his discourse in the house of Cornelius, to speak of Him as the man "Jesus of Nazareth, anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil; for God was with him." But now, risen and exalted to heaven, He is "Lord of all" and "ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." It is in His name, and through belief in Him, that men must receive remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.[1] It is in His name that miracles of power are done.[2] There is indeed salvation in none other: for neither is there any other name under heaven that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.[3] He is "the Prince" or "the Prince of life," and the "Saviour." His is "the Name."[4] This is their summary creed—Jesus is the Christ—Jesus is Lord. The one name of salvation is the name of Jesus. Beholding Him in the moment of martyrdom, standing as Son of Man on the right hand of God, Stephen addresses to Him the prayer—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and probably the words following, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," just as Jesus on the cross had addressed the Father, "Father. into thy hands I commend my spirit," "Father, forgive them." Before Pentecost, when the disciple who was to fill up the place of Judas had to be chosen, they had prayed and said "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom thou hast chosen, to take the place in this ministry and apostleship," and it is probable[5] that the Lord Jesus just mentioned is in that place also being appealed to, to make a fresh choice in order to fill the vacancy in the number of the twelve whom He had chosen when on earth. It should be noted that "to call on the name of Jesus," or "to invoke His name" upon themselves, to invoke Him in prayer, is spoken of (cap. ix 14, 21) as the characteristic habit of the disciples.

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[1] Acts ii 22–36. This must not be taken to imply that he was not the Christ when on earth. It was as the Christ that He suffered, iv 10.

[2] We should notice that the glorified Christ is the man Jesus of Nazareth who had lived and died on earth. There are no signs at all of the pre-existent heavenly man-like being of the Similitudes of Enoch.

Further it was "in the name of the Lord Jesus" that men were baptized[1]; and, if we accept the account of what occurred at the Last Supper as St. Paul declares himself to have "received" it and as the Synoptists relate it, we must believe that when the disciples met for "the breaking of the bread"[2] they celebrated, according to their Lord's institution, the sacrament of His body and blood, and in that solemn rite acknowledged that He who had given His body and blood in sacrifice for them upon the Cross, and who was now alive at the right hand of God, was also amongst them on earth, where they were gathered together in His name, to be their spiritual food, and to bind them together in one. Such a rite and such an accompanying belief seem to imply a conception of Christ's person beyond what, to judge from the record of Acts, they were at present explicitly entertaining or proclaiming.[3]

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[1] Acts x 36–43.

[2] Acts iii 16.

[3] Acts iv 12.

[4] Acts iii 15, v 31, 41, ix 14–16.

[5] Acts i 21–4. The consideration to the contrary is that the single Greek word for 'that knoweth the hearts' (καρδιογνῶστα) is used of God, i.e. the Father, in xv 8.

What then was "the faith in Jesus" or "in His Name" of the first Christian community, intellectually considered? It was not, we should judge, an explicit faith in His deity, but faith in Him as Lord.[4] "Jesus is Christ and Lord" and "He has sent down upon us His Holy Spirit" was their summary creed. But to believe in the universal Lordship of Jesus, and His enthronement at God's right hand—to believe that He is to judge the quick and dead—that from Him the Spirit of God is received and in His name sins are forgiven in baptism and wonders done—that His name is the one name of salvation given to all men under heaven—that He is to be called upon in prayer—that He is present in "the breaking of the bread" to be the spiritual food of His disciples—all this taken together means certainly that He had for them "the values of God." Not indeed all the "values" of God, for they would not yet have thought of Him, as far as we can see, as the Creator or sustainer of the world. But with regard to all that concerned their spiritual relations to God, Jesus held towards them such a position as a mere man, however highly endowed, could not have held. How was this to be accounted for? It was an ambiguous moment. One can imagine an intelligent Greek, who knew the severity of the Jewish monotheism, and was accustomed to contrast it with the lax ascription of deity to eminent things or persons in the Hellenic or Roman world, watching the Christians in Jerusalem with interest, and taking note that these Jews were apparently abandoning what he had always regarded as their chief religious stronghold—their stubborn belief in one only God and their stubborn refusal to worship any other being. What was to be the end of it?

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[1] Acts viii 16. I have not cited the text (Matt. xxviii 19), "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," because, on purely critical principles, it is difficult to be sure of its being really a word of Christ on earth; nor do I discuss the question of baptism only in the name of Jesus. The whole body of sacramental questions, with the question of the Church and its authority, is deferred to the next volume.

[2] Acts ii 42.

[3] On the doubts constantly being raised whether Jesus really in fact instituted any sacrament of His body and blood for future observance by His Church, see appended note A, p. 395.

[4] I must not, of course, pass over the position of the critics who constantly inform us that it is in St. Paul that we first find the affirmation that Jesus is Lord. See appended note B, p. 398.

II

It was not to end in any weakening of monotheism. Among the fiercest of their Jewish enemies was one who, converted to faith in Jesus, was to show them how to conciliate their old faith in the one God with their newly born faith in the lordship of Jesus.

I do not think it is an accident that St. Paul is said by St. Luke, at the first moment after his conversion to have proclaimed "Jesus that he is the Son of God."[1] Nor is it without serious meaning that St. Paul describes his own conversion as the revelation through him of Jesus as "God's son"—"to reveal his Son by me that I might preach him among the Gentiles."[2] That was the term, so solemnly used by Jesus of Himself, in which St. Paul saw the secret of His person. No doubt from the date of his conversion his soul went out in passionate faith toward Jesus as the glorified Christ and as the Lord. But he was, what no one of the earlier apostles had been, a man who had received the highest training of the Jewish schools "at the feet of" the renowned Rabbi Gamaliel, and we should judge from his Epistles that he was not only a Jewish theologian but also had imbibed at his native city of Tarsus something of the philosophical spirit for which it was famous. He could not be content to worship Jesus as Lord without understanding why such worship could be given Him, and how it was to be reconciled with the strict faith in one only God, one only object of worship, which retained his whole-hearted loyalty to the end.

He had the opportunity after his conversion of thinking out his position. After his first "act of reparation" at Damascus when, with all possible courage and at the greatest risk, he proclaimed his new faith "that Jesus is the Son of God" and "confounded the Jews that dwell at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ," he was hurried secretly out of the city and passed probably some years in Arabia. Then, three years after his conversion, he paid a brief visit to Jerusalem, where again "he preached boldly in the name of the Lord," but again was in risk of his life from the hostility of the Jews, and was sent off to his old home, Tarsus, out of harm's way, and must have been there perhaps some seven years. But we hear little or nothing of any evangelistic work there.[1] It is probable that his sojourn both in Arabia and in Tarsus was on the whole a time of retirement and thought. From the time when Barnabas fetched him to Antioch, his life must have been one of ceaseless strain. But before that he had had time to think out the meaning of his new faith, of which he had already, at Damascus and especially at Jerusalem, received "the tradition,"[2] and he had found in the doctrine of the divine sonship the way of reconciliation between his old monotheism and his new belief in the lordship of Jesus.[3]

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[1] It must be remembered that Acts viii 37 (the only previous mention of "the Son of God" in our old version of Acts) is probably not part of the true text.

[2] Gal. i 16; cf. ver. 24, and Lightfoot's convincing note on i 16.

But before we enquire into the sources of St. Paul's doctrine of Christ's person, we must have it clearly before our mind, and we should take notice that the way in which it is referred to in his epistles seems to show conclusively that, in its main lines, it must have formed part of his first preaching when founding his churches, for it is not introduced anywhere in his writings as if it were a new thing.

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[1] He speaks (Gal. i 21) of going "into the region of Syria and Cilicia," and of the Christians in Judaea hearing "that he that once persecuted them now preached the faith of which he once made havoc." We hear of "brethren in Syria and Cilicia," and at the beginning of the second missionary journey "he went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches" (Acts xv 23, 41). But if these churches were of his foundation we should have been likely to hear something of them. And we hear nothing.

[2] He tells us himself that he received the tradition concerning the Resurrection (1 Cor. xv 1–3) and concerning the institution of the Eucharist (probably there was more that he does not mention). Galatians i 17, ii 6 must be read in the light of these disclosures.

[3] I am glad to see that Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung*, vol. ii, p. 348, recognizes the importance, not only of "the tradition" which St. Paul received in Damascus and Jerusalem, but also of the long period of subsequent reflection before he began his mission work: "In der langen Zeit, die er nach seiner Bekehrung in Damascus und Tarsus zubrachte, muss er über die neue Erkenntnis gegrübelt haben, die ihm aufgegangen war, bis er mit seiner Anschauungen in reinen war und sie sich in seiner Weise logisch zurecht gelegt hatte, so dass er alsdann die Missionstätigkeit beginnen konnte."

He is full of the familiar thought of the Lordship of Christ, and indeed occasionally the Lord (Jehovah) and the Lord (Christ) are unmistakably identified—that is, Old Testament language about the former is applied to the latter.[1] But St. Paul has—what the Church before him apparently had not—an explanation. Christ can be thus treated as divine Lord, or identified with Jehovah, because before He was sent into the world He was with the Father as His Son—" his own son " (Rom. viii 3), " the son of his love " (Col. i 13). The glorified Christ can be the very "image of God"[2] because, at the beginning of things, as Son of the Father, He had been God's " image "—the expression of the invisible God.[3] Through Him, the Son, has God done whatever in the process of creation He has done. He is " the heir of all creation "—" through him are all things "—" in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers ; all things have been created through him, and unto him (he is their end) ; and he is (or ' he exists ') before all things, and in him all things have their coherence." He is not only the creator of all that is, but also the continuous, immanent principle of order in the universe.[4] It is He who was supplying the need of the Israelites in the wilderness as " the rock that followed them."[1] He it was who "when the fulness of the time was come" was sent forth "born of a woman, born under the law," "in the likeness of the flesh of sin," but "knowing no sin,"[2] as man to redeem mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, who will believe on Him. He was, as man on earth, their example, and their propitiation before God, and now He is continuously from heaven the source of their new life by His Spirit. For that divine Sonship which was veiled during His mortal life and in His death, was declared again unmistakably in His resurrection[3]; and thereupon, being exalted to the heavenly places, He communicates His own Spirit, which is the Spirit of God, to the Church, which is His body, and to all its members, so that "in Him" they may live as sons in His sonship, and by Him be renewed into His image, and remaining in Him,[4] whether they live or die, may be prepared to meet Him when He comes in glory, being already associated with Him in the life of God.

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[1] See Romans x 9–15 (Joel ii 32) ; 2 Thess. i 9 (Is. ii 10, 19, 21) ; 1 Cor. ii 16 (Is. xl 13, lxx) ; 1 Cor. x 21 (Mal. i 7, 12). This identification has been described as " not proven " in any case in the N.T. But it seems to me beyond dispute. See Sanday and Headlam on Rom. x.

[2] 2 Cor. iv 4.

[3] Col. i 15.

[4] See 1 Cor. viii 6 ; Col. i 15–17. Nothing can better Lightfoot's notes on this passage.

This is St. Paul's doctrine of Christ in summary. I think Dr. Allan Menzies (commenting on 2 Cor. iv 4) is right in saying "It was difficult for them (Jews) to take in how one who had been a man on the earth could be [a] God, and if this was not accepted, all the other Pauline doctrines remained incredible, a tangle of paradoxes and indiscretions. The verse shows very clearly how the whole of Paul's thought hinged on his doctrine of Christ's divinity."

St. Paul is not a scientific writer who exhibits his thought accurately and consecutively stated. If he had been this, he would have saved the controversial and critical world a great deal of trouble, but he would not have been St. Paul. He does, however, incidentally give us what it is hardly an exaggeration to call a careful theory of the meaning of the Incarnation in the Epistle to the Philippians, though the theory as given is only incidental to an ethical exhortation. His theme is humility, and his example of humility is Christ, not only within the compass of His human life but before that—in the act of taking humanity. For "pre-existing in the characteristics [or nature] of God, he set no store on equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the characteristics [or nature] of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and bestowed upon him the name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."[1]

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[1] 1 Cor. x 4. In this connection I am inclined to believe that the A.V. of verse 9 gives the right reading: "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted."

[2] See Rom. viii 3, Gal. iv 4, 2 Cor. v 21.

[3] Rom. i 3–4.

[4] "In the Lord," or "in Christ," or "in Christ Jesus," or "in the Lord Jesus."

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[1] Phil. ii 5–11. This is one of the passages in the N.T. which have been obscured by excessively minute scrutiny. I do not think anything can better Lightfoot's commentary. Some people are disposed to dispute that "emptied himself" or "annulled himself" is meant as a description of the act of the Incarnation at all. They would apparently translate "he emptied himself, having taken," *i.e.* He first took human nature and then humbled Himself. But "emptied himself" here is surely parallel to "beggared himself" or "made himself poor" in 2 Cor. viii 9. Both phrases describe an act of abandonment by our Lord of the state belonging to His divine nature which was involved in becoming man. "Emptied himself" is therefore to be distinguished from the "humbled himself" which follows in Phil. ii 7, and which describes His conduct after He became man. See Menzies on 2 Cor. viii 9. "With the phrase 'chose poverty' [or 'made himself poor'] we may compare 'he emptied himself' (Phil. ii), which refers not to the act of Jesus as a man, but to the great act of humiliation He performed when He gave up His existence in the form of God, and took on Himself the form of a servant."

The word translated "characteristics" (or "nature," which I

This being St. Paul's doctrine of a real incarnation of the Son of God, who pre-existed in the essential characteristics or nature of God, we ask whether St. Paul believes Him to have been, and calls Him without qualification, God. What everywhere confronts us in St. Paul's letters is that he attributes to Him—always in definite subordination to God, the Father[1]—all the characteristic functions of God; the creation of all things in the universe and the maintenance of creation, as we have seen; the providence which directs the accidents of life; the "grace" that redeems men and holds them "in Christ" or "in the Lord" as the sphere in which they live; the final judgment which is unerringly to assess each human life; the crowning of the redeemed with glory and the consummation of the whole creation.[2] In the whole range of divine activities there appears to be no district in which

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think is a better word) is literally "form"; but the English word is misleading. The original word describes the "permanent characteristics" or "kind" or "manner of being" of anything. See Lightfoot *in loc.* and Trench, *Synonyms*, pp. 247 ff. So the "form of the servant" describes the permanent characteristics or "nature" of manhood—with probable reference to the "servant of Jehovah" in Second Isaiah. The words "likeness" and "fashion" which follow affirm that the Son of God not only took the real nature but also the outward appearance and condition of manhood. The Son not only became really man, but ordinary man, like other men to look at, and like other men in all the changing conditions of life. (See further *Can We then Believe*, n. 6, p. 191.)

[1] Alike in (*a*) His cosmic activities, and (*b*) in His redemptive activities the Son is subordinate to the Father; see for (*a*) 1 Cor. viii 6, Col. i 15, and for (*b*) Gal. iv 4, Col. i 19, 1 Cor. xi 3. It is not necessary to multiply quotations. And the essential subordination of the Son to the Father, as recipient to source, has always been the Catholic doctrine. See Westcott on John xiv 28. In 1 Cor. xv 28 St. Paul speaks of the ultimate order, when the work of the mediatorial Kingdom of Christ is fully accomplished, and all resistance and rebellion is over for ever, and in that ultimate order the Son is subordinate to the Father.

[2] It is not necessary to multiply quotations, but see Col. i 14–18, 1 Thess. iii 11, 2 Cor. xiii 14, and Gal. i 3, 2 Cor. v 17, 2 Cor. v 10, Rom. vi 23, 2 Thess. ii 14, Phil. iii 21, ii 10, Eph. i 10.

God, that is the Father, is not associated with His Son, nor is it in St. Paul's mind apparently conceivable that the honour paid to the Son, the Lord Jesus, throughout the whole created universe, should be any derogation from or should be distinguishable from the honour paid to the Father, or that there should be anything given to the Father in the way of homage by His creatures which is withheld from the Son. On the whole the instinct of monotheism (and no doubt the pressing necessity to maintain the language of monotheism in churches of Gentile origin) leads St. Paul generally to speak of the Father alone as God and of the Son as Lord: "For us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him" (1 Cor. viii 6); but so completely is the Son represented as sharing in the divine life and activity that it is, I think, wilful to question the ascription to the Christ, who was born of Jewish stock "as concerning the flesh," of the words—which seem so plainly to suggest the antithesis of the glory of Christ to His humiliation—"who is over all, God blessed for ever"[1] or to question the phrase in St. Paul's speech at Miletus to the Ephesian elders, "the Church of God which he purchased with his own blood," or "the blood which is his own."[2] We should conclude, then, that as St. Paul constantly associates the Lord (Jesus) in all the strictly divine activity and glory, so occasionally he calls Him God.

We know that St. Paul would have attributed his doctrine of Christ to direct divine inspiration.[1] Just as our Lord would have St. Peter assured that his confession of His Messiahship was due to nothing lower than divine revelation, so would St. Paul have felt and claimed for his fuller conviction about Christ's person. But in neither case can divine revelation be taken to exclude human and external influences. Whence, then, we ask, did St. Paul derive, not his conviction, but the materials through which this conviction expressed itself?

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[1] Rom. ix 5. See Sanday and Headlam *in loc.*

[2] Acts xx 28. In this phrase I think with Rackham God means the Father, but the blood of Christ is called "his own." In Titus ii 13, however, I think Parry, following Hort, is probably right in treating the words "Jesus Christ" as in apposition to "the glory of our great God and Saviour." Christ, that is, is "the glory of God" (see below, pp. 424 ff.).

It has been commonly suggested by those who are absorbed in the new study of "apocalyptic" that St. Paul's idea of the pre-existent Christ is derived from the Similitudes of the Book of Enoch or from similar sources which have perished. But this suggestion ought to be abandoned. The figure in the Similitudes is that of a quasi-angelic being in human form, who is being preserved in the secret treasury of God to be manifested only at the end of the world to carry out the Divine judgment and to usher in the world to come. If in the original document he is called "the son of man" (which I hold to be very doubtful), yet in no real sense has he ever been man, nor ever will be—that is, not in the sense of sharing the nature or experience, physical and spiritual, of the sons of men. It is a fundamentally "docetic" figure—that of these Similitudes—neither in any real sense divine nor in any real sense human. St. Paul shows, I think, not the slightest trace of such a presentation. He never speaks of the "Son of Man"; and the pre-existent "Son of God" of St. Paul is divine, subsisting in the "form" of God, and not yet in any sense human; but at a definite moment in time, by a definite human birth of a woman, He became man. It was not that He appeared merely in human guise, but that He really became man, in the solidity of human flesh and reality of human character, and as man lived, and was crucified and died, and was buried, and rose again and was glorified, and is "to come."[1] Nor is there any reason to think that St. Paul was influenced by Philo's hazy conception of the ideal man who exists among the ideas of the eternal world,[2] nor by any ancient myth of an eternal man. There is no trace in St. Paul of any "eternal man" at all. The only phrase pleaded on behalf of such a suggestion is the phrase "the second man is from heaven." In its context, I think, this phrase can only describe the coming of Christ in glory, not His first appearance on earth.[3] The Apostle is answering the question "with what manner of body do they [the dead] come," that is, at the resurrection day. And he answers that they will come in a spiritual body, like to Christ who has now become "life-giving spirit," and will come as the "second man from heaven." St. Paul was, in fact, not enunciating any old theory which he might be supposed to have learned as a Pharisee, but something which the resurrection of Christ (and his vision of the risen Christ) had taught him for the first time.[4]

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[1] Gal. i 12, 15, 16.

To recur, then, to the question whence St. Paul derived the material for this conception of Christ: I think the answer must be in the first place that he was much better acquainted than some people appear to suppose with the words of Christ. We must recognize, as has been already argued, that St. Paul, after his conversion, received "a tradition" which in certain respects was already formulated. I think this tradition probably included a record of the sayings of Christ. But whether this be so or no, we are bound to acknowledge that St. Paul had in his mind, if not in his hand, some record of the words of Christ, and assumes that the converts knew it also—for four times he refers to a particular "word of the Lord" as of final and decisive authority.[1] I think also St. Paul's ethical teaching shows unmistakable and close familiarity with Christ's teaching. His estimate of the law of love, and his description of love, and of "the fruit of the Spirit," and his appeal to "the meekness and gentleness of Christ," and to His example of humility, will, if we meditate on them, convince us of this.[2] In the same way I think the remarkable phrase which occurs five times in St. Paul's epistles, "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,"[3] and which is used side by side with phrases such as "our Father" or "the Father," means that St. Paul knew how it had been our Lord's habit to speak to His disciples—never of "our Father,"[4] but of "your Father," and "my Father." "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" then, as St. Paul uses it, means Him whom Jesus Christ used constantly to speak of as "my Father." And if he knew how Jesus spoke of God as His Father, he must have known that He spoke of Himself as the Son. Thus I have grown to feel convinced that St. Paul must have had in his mind, and very possibly in written form before his eyes, such words as "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes; yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in thy sight.[1] All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father: neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him," and "Of that day and that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son," and again the parable of the Husbandmen, suggesting so sharp a distinction between the servants of God (the prophets) and the only Son. Though, as I have said, the note of the divine sonship of Christ was absent apparently from the first Apostolic preaching, it is very difficult to doubt that there was thought and talk about such memorable sayings as these in their bearing on the mystery of Christ's person. And St. Paul was more quick than others to catch their full meaning.

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[1] See for St. Paul's doctrine Phil. ii 6–10, Gal. iv 4. This verse in Galatians with Rom. i 3 implies the reality of His human flesh; when St. Paul talks of His character as obedient, meek and gentle, he implies His full spiritual humanity. As He had the "form" of God, so He took the "form," that is, the real nature, of man. St. Paul was not confronted with any docetism. But there is no reason to think he would have made any terms with it. Christ in glory is still human and His "body of glory" is the pattern of the body of glory which we are all destined to enjoy, Phil. iii 21. On 2 Cor. v 16, "Christ after the flesh," see appended Note C, p. 401.

[2] See Lebreton, *Origines*, p. 216.

[3] 1 Cor. xv 47. See Robertson and Plummer, *in loc.* (*Internat. Crit. Comm.*). Also Dalman, *op. cit.*, pp. 251 f.

[4] On what has just been said, I must refer back for confirmation to the Note on pp. 326 ff.; also to *Can We then Believe*, pp. 181 ff.

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[1] 1 Cor. vii 10, ix 14, 1 Thess. iv 15, Acts xx 35. In the last two cases the "words of the Lord" have not been otherwise preserved. In the first two they have. See also 1 Tim. vi 3.

[2] So Dr. Rashdall, *The Idea of Atonement*, pp. 106 ff.

[3] Rom. xv 6, 2 Cor. i 3, xi 31, Eph. i 3, Col. i 3.

[4] "Our Father" (in the Lord's Prayer) is only put into the lips of the disciples.

Moreover it is plain that St. Paul's doctrine of the pre-existence of the Son, before the world was, and His co-operation with the Father in all His works, and His incarnation in the fulness of time, did not in any way shock or surprise the Church. There were, we know, aspects and elements in St. Paul's teaching which excited alarm and caused dissension. This is much more evident in St. Paul's own Epistles than in the Acts. But there is no such note of emphasis on his teaching about the person of Christ as to suggest that it was surprising by its novelty or calculated to raise antagonism. It is taken for granted as an accepted truth. And this could not have been the case if the idea of Jesus as Son of God, in a unique and pre-eminent sense, had not been in the tradition of the first Jerusalem Church, though for the time it appears to have been almost ignored, while attention was wholly concentrated upon His Messiahship and Lordship. Those who believe, as I do, that the author of the Fourth Gospel gives us real memorials of Jesus, and is no other than John the son of Zebedee, will remember that he was at Jerusalem at least during the earlier stages of St. Paul's career as an Apostle, and that St. Paul had converse with him as one of the "pillars." It is universally assumed that St. Paul influenced the author of the Johannine writings. I cannot help thinking it is possible that St. John may have communicated something to St. Paul.

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[1] I suspect that 1 Cor. i 18 ff. is reminiscent of the context of these words: "I thank thee, Father," etc.

I should not, of course, wish to lay any stress on this possibility. But I do wish to lay stress on the fact that St. Paul's doctrine of the Son of God seems to have caused no surprise or opposition; and this could hardly have been the case unless it had been already present in germ in the tradition of the Church, though it was not apparently much in evidence, while the whole attention of the Church was preoccupied with something else.

There is nothing in the Synoptists which very directly suggests the association of the Son in the activities of creation or of nature, though there is one saying in the Fourth Gospel which probably does suggest it[1]: "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." But as soon as ever the idea of the Son, as associated with the Father in His eternal life, had presented itself to St. Paul's mind, it would probably have clothed itself in the associations of the Wisdom of God as that is presented in *the Book of Proverbs* and especially in *the Wisdom of Solomon*, with which St. Paul in the Romans shows himself well acquainted.[2]

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[1] John v 17–20.

[2] See Sanday and Headlam, p. 51.

The divine "Wisdom" in these books is not conceived of as really a person, but it is strikingly personified. It is represented as if it had separate existence as God's effulgence or self-expression, before ever the world was; and (perhaps in Proverbs, certainly in the Book of Wisdom) as His agent in creation and in His self-revelation to men. Much of the language that St. Paul uses about the activity of the Son in the creation and sustentation of the world is paralleled in this literature. "The Lord possessed me (or 'formed me') as the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. . . . Then I was by him as a master workman (?); and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in his habitable earth; and my delight was with the sons of men."[1] And in the Book of Wisdom, Wisdom is called "the artificer of all things . . . Yea she pervadeth and penetrateth all things. . . . She is an effulgence from everlasting light; and an unspotted mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness. And she, being one, hath power to do all things; and remaining in herself, reneweth all things: and from generation to generation passing into holy souls, she maketh men friends of God and prophets." "She reacheth from one end of the world to the other with full strength, and ordereth all things graciously." And Solomon prays, "Give me wisdom, her that sitteth by thee on thy throne; . . . send her forth from thy holy heaven, and from the throne of thy glory bid her come."[2]

There can be no doubt that at least the Book of Wisdom exhibits the influence of Greek philosophy. The intellectual world, under the influence of Platonists and Stoics, was full of the conception of a divine Reason, immanent in the universe as its order and law, and the source of the reason of man. St. Paul's own city Tarsus, where he was brought up, and to which he returned for a good many years after his conversion, was pre-eminently a philosophic city.[1] I do not suppose that St. Paul was a member of any of the philosophic schools. But I think it is impossible he can have been ignorant of the philosophical ideas which constituted the common intellectual atmosphere of educated men in his own city. And when we read such phrases as "in him (the Son) all things consist" or "in him we live and move and have our being," we cannot dissociate such an idea of an immanent God from the influences of current philosophy, or doubt that in St. Paul's mind this current conception of a pervading reason helped him to frame his conception of the activities of the Son of God in nature.

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[1] Prov. viii 22–30.

[2] Wisd. vii 22 to ix 18.

Nevertheless the influence of philosophy, or even of the Book of Wisdom, on St. Paul must not be exaggerated. St. Paul's attitude towards philosophy is not sympathetic or at all trustful. He delivers his solemn affirmations about Christ wholly as a revelation of God. As I have said, I believe him to have found in Christ's own words the source of his doctrine of His divine sonship, He *may* have found there also a foundation for his doctrine of the co-operation of the Son with the Father in the creation and maintenance of nature. But as regards both doctrines, or, to speak more properly, both parts of the same doctrine, we shall note that the authors of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Fourth Gospel are entirely at one with St. Paul. They all use the same language about the functions of the Son in nature. They reflect, no doubt, the language of the later Jewish theology about the Wisdom or Word of God. But the principle of such language is a fundamental principle of Old Testament religion. It is the refusal to separate the spiritual from the material, or God's work in men's souls from His work in nature. It would have seemed self-evident to a Jew that if the Son is the organ of God's revelation and communication of Himself to men's souls, He must also and equally be the organ of His work in creating and ordering nature. And in this principle we must surely see a real inspiration of the Spirit of truth.

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[1] See Strabo, xiv 5. 13: "The zeal of its inhabitants for philosophy and general culture is such that they have surpassed even Athens and Alexandria and all other cities where schools of philosophy can be mentioned. And its pre-eminence in this respect is so great, because there the students are all townspeople and foreign students do not readily settle there." Strabo was an older contemporary of St. Paul.

III

Next, the Epistle to the Hebrews must claim our attention. Nothing can bring more clearly before our minds the *novelty* of literary criticism considered as a science than the fact that for so many centuries this Epistle should have been held to be by St. Paul. For though the ultimate theology is closely similar to St. Paul's, the tone of thought, as well as the phraseology[1] and style, is characteristically different. Who wrote this Epistle we do not know, but we are, I think, safe in saying that it was written for Jews and before, but not much before, the destruction of Jerusalem, and that it was written by one whose thought suggests Alexandria as his spiritual home.

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[1] Thus God is scarcely called the "Father"; the idea of our being "in Christ Jesus" or "in the Lord" is absent; the doctrine of the Spirit is very slightly touched. There is (strangely) no assertion of the universalism of the Gospel. The antitheses "law" and "grace," "faith" and "works," "flesh" and "spirit" are not to be found. It is not certain that the author was acquainted with Philo's writings, but he certainly breathed in their atmosphere. For instance, for him heaven is the world of spiritual and intellectual realities and earth the world of shadows and images. People who say that for the early Christians heaven was definitely a place above our heads seem to forget the Epistle to the Hebrews.

It has one dominant purpose, that is to present to thoughtful Jewish converts, who were in danger of relapsing, the essential superiority of Christianity to the religion of the Old Testament and its finality, on the ground of its providing for men, through Christ, perfect and unhindered approach to God. That is to say, in other words, that its subject is the high-priesthood of Christ. But though this special doctrine of the Epistle is a fascinating subject, we are not at present directly concerned with it. What we are concerned with is simply the author's doctrine of the person of Christ, and this we shall find is almost identical with St. Paul's.

"Jesus," then, (for the writer most often used this purely human name,) had not the beginning of His personal existence when He took flesh. Before all creation He was the effulgence of God's glory and the very image of His substance.[1] These phrases suggest coeternity with God, but not directly personality. But they are coupled with the personal words "the son," and the "heir of all things"; and (as with St. Paul) it is the Son through whom God made the worlds, and it is He who bears along or upholds all things by the utterance of His power. As Son of the Father He builds the house of which Moses is the servant.[2] Again, as with St. Paul, all His activity in redemption is seen upon the background of His functions in the whole of nature. He is "God's Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who, being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high."[3] But though there is thus unmistakable continuity of personal being and action between these different "moments" of the Son's life, yet there is no idea of any eternal *manhood*. He became man at a particular date. Thus He who had been so much above the angels was "made a little lower than the angels."[1] "He partook of flesh and blood."[2] "He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham."[3] "He sprang out of Judah."[4] And great emphasis is laid on the reality of His manhood in spirit as well as flesh. "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."[5] "In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."[6] "Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things that he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."[7] His priesthood for men depends upon the reality of His manhood and human development: and it is in the perfection of His manhood that "he sat down on the right hand of God."[8]

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[1] i 2–4. [2] iii 1–6. [3] i 2–4.

Thus as He is properly divine, so He is properly human: but His personality is divine throughout—He is the eternal Son. That in which He offers Himself is "eternal spirit."[9] Whether, in the quotation from Ps. xlv,[10] He is called "God" is not certain; but the words of Ps. cii, which describe the activity of the Lord (Jehovah) and His unchangeableness and eternity, are certainly ascribed to Jesus,[11] and apparently to Him is ascribed "the glory for ever and ever."[12] Certainly in this Epistle there is the full doctrine of the Incarnation, quite explicit.

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[1] ii 9.
[2] ii 14.
[3] ii 16.
[4] vii 14.
[5] iv 15.
[6] ii 18.
[7] v 7–9.
[8] x 12.
[9] ix 14.
[10] i 8. Westcott translates "God is thy throne."
[11] i 10.
[12] xiii 21.

But before leaving this Epistle I should wish to emphasize its relative independence not only side by side with St. Paul's Epistles, but also side by side with Philo.

No doubt the author's intellectual equipment and outlook are those of Alexandrian Judaism, but the special value of his testimony to the doctrine of the Incarnation lies in this—that whereas the ideology of Philo and of other like Jewish thinkers would have come naturally to him, as a matter of fact his Christianity—his faith in Jesus—had given to all the current of ideas represented by Philo a wholly changed basis and tendency. He believed in the man Jesus: he clung with intense conviction and appreciation to His human sufferings of body and mind. The object on which his mind rested was, not an idea, but a person of flesh and blood, who has lived and struggled and suffered among the ordinary children of men. It is this strongly held historical basis of his faith which so deeply differentiates it from the ideology of Philo. It is not that he has transmuted the faith of the first disciples into something different by the use of Alexandrian ideas. It is that the first faith in Jesus, the actual historical person, accepted as what He declared Himself to be, the Son of God, has found in the Alexandrian tradition of Judaism ideas and terms in which it can express itself. This is to say that, by the side of St. Paul, the writer to the Hebrews stands with a very substantial originality, and with a very independent grasp upon the facts concerning Jesus; but, by the side of Philo, he stands on a different basis, and is travelling by a different road to a different goal.

I will leave to another chapter the rest of the New Testament books. But I feel that we have already traversed together—I and my readers—the most important and the most difficult part of our road. The task on which we set out was to follow along the process by which the faith in Jesus of the first disciples developed into a clear belief in His person.

We watched how, unconsciously, the overmastering sense of authority resident and active in Him brought them into an attitude towards Him which cannot be otherwise described than that He came to have for them "the values of God." We saw too that Jesus Himself seems to have deliberately ministered to this result. Then we watched their failure of faith over the scandal of the cross and their recovery in the light of the Resurrection. Again we saw how their crucified Master, now raised to be the Lord of all at God's right hand, comes to have, in even fuller sense than before, the values of God for them. We cannot doubt that there must have been deep questioning in their souls and probably in their conversation as to the secret of His person and how the Man could be thus exalted to the place of God. But we catch no word about the divine Sonship in their public preaching. It is St. Paul who, as far as our records go, first appears to have brought the idea of the Sonship, grounded so securely in Christ's own language, to explain the divine exaltation of the Man and to give the Church the formula for its creed; but we have seen that the Church and its teachers, as far as St. Paul's Epistles and other documents of the New Testament[1] enable us to judge, appear to have accepted this doctrine about eternal Sonship and incarnation without controversy or demurrer. We have seen the same doctrine a few years after St. Paul's death unhesitatingly affirmed in the Epistle of a man equal to St. Paul in intellectual equipment, though independent of him in training and in the character of his mind. What we have still to ask ourselves is whether this process in the disciples' minds, so far as we have followed it, is for us really imaginable unless we suppose that the leading under which they were moving forward was the leading of God, and the conviction about Jesus to which they were led was the truth. But to that question we shall return, when we have considered the other documents of the New Testament.

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[1] See below on the Epistles of Peter, James and Jude, pp. 423 ff.

Note A

On the doubts raised whether Jesus in fact instituted the Sacrament of His Body and Blood for the observance of His Church.

Bousset and the critics of his school maintain that the sacramental ideas and rites of St. Paul—in particular those connected with the Eucharist—were not derived from Jesus or from the early Jerusalem church, but had their origin in the Hellenistic churches of Syria, where sacramentalism was developed among the Christians under the influence of the Pagan mystery religions with which they had been familiar before their conversion. What St. Paul did was, with the help of a vision, recorded in 1 Cor. xi 23 ff., to formulate and give consistency to the sacramental principle on the basis of the Jew's belief in God and the newly-won belief in Jesus as " the Lord " and as " the Spirit." This theory must wait for fuller consideration till the next volume. But before Bousset wrote, and more widely than his influence has spread, it has been the custom (see Inge's *Outspoken Essays* (1919), pp. 227 f. and 249) among many critics to maintain that Jesus instituted no sacraments as He founded no church. Doubtless He celebrated a fraternal meal with His disciples before His Passion, which had a spiritual significance, as He was probably accustomed to do. But He instituted no rite for any future church, such as is implied in the words " Do this in remembrance of me " (1 Cor. xi 24, 25). The suggestion of these critics is that when St. Paul speaks of himself as having " received from the Lord " and " delivered to you " (1 Cor. xi 23) the account of the institution of such a rite at the Last Supper, with the solemn injunction

"Do this in remembrance of me," he means that he had received it *in a vision from Jesus*. This vision did not correspond at all closely to the historical reality, but its teaching and the practice based upon it spread rapidly through the churches. So that when the Synoptic Gospels were written it had become the accepted institution in all the churches and was related in the Gospels as history.

This theory seems to me to be in manifold ways arbitrary and improbable. For (1) St. Paul speaks also of having "received" and "delivered" the record of the Resurrection in 1 Cor. xv 2–4, and no one can reasonably doubt that he is there referring to the tradition of the Church (see verse 11). It is obvious, therefore, to interpret his words about the "tradition" of the Eucharist in the same sense (see Dr. Anderson Scott in *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, p. 337). It was "from the Lord" as its source, though through the Church, that St. Paul received it.

(2) If he had received it in a vision surely its form would have been different. It would hardly have come as an historical record. See Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, vol. iii. pp. 273 ff.: "A passage earlier in the Epistle, where the apostle is interpreting [the sacrament] will suggest that Jesus [in the vision of Paul] might have said 'The bread which ye break is a communion in my body—the cup which ye partake is a communion in my blood.'" Nothing can read less like a vision than St. Paul's actual narrative.[1] Or if such a vision had been seen or imagined by St. Paul, which did not correspond to the facts as they had been hitherto received or to the practice of the churches already

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[1] Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung*, vol. i. p. 175, is very emphatic that the account of the Last Supper, as St. Paul gives it, "belonged to the oldest element of the tradition, as Paul had received it in Damascus." It was as "a sharply formulated tradition" (fest formulierte Tradition) that he produced it. "He received the tradition of the institution of the Last Supper in the same sense 'from the Lord' as he received the Gospel as a whole. . . . In fact his information came naturally from the three years of his period of instruction in Damascus, which was completed through his intercourse with Peter and James in Jerusalem. Therefore it cannot be plausibly suggested that he here (i.e. in 1 Cor. xi) offers a special tradition about the Lord's Supper differing from the general tradition."

established, is it likely that such a vision would have altered the practice of all the churches, including the Jewish churches, for whom the first Gospel was written? This seems very improbable.

(3) Curiously enough the critics are driven to find the most trustworthy account of the original institution—that which has not been affected by St. Paul's vision—in the Gospel of his companion St. Luke, according to the shorter reading of his Gospel, found in some Western authorities, which leaves out all the words after "this is my body"—down to "poured out for you" (Luke xxii 19–20). On the subject of this reading I must refer to *Can We then Believe*, n. 10, p. 199. However "the shorter text" is to be accounted for, it appears to me to be utterly improbable that St. Luke, writing when the tradition affirmed so solemnly by St. Paul and confirmed in St. Mark's and St. Matthew's Gospels was firmly established alike in the Gentile and Jewish Churches, intended to substitute what he believed to be a more trustworthy tradition. If the shorter text be original, the omission is much more probably to be ascribed to lack of space.

(4) Dr. Rashdall's pages on the Last Supper (*The Idea of Atonement*, pp. 37 ff.) are written to dispose of the idea that "a certain expiatory value was attached by our Lord Himself to His approaching death" in the phrases "This is my body [which is given for you]," "This is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many [for the remission of sins]." With the subject of the atonement we shall have to deal later on. But as far as the accounts of the Eucharist are concerned Dr. Rashdall's pages seem to me to represent that type of "criticism" which is least worthy of the name—the type of criticism which is resolved at all costs to eliminate what it does not want to accept. It is quite certain that the words in St. Mark, St. Matthew, St. Paul, and St. Luke (longer text) all alike postulate a Christ who believed Himself to be inaugurating a new covenant, according to the prophecies that so it should be; and to be inaugurating it by sacrifice—by His blood—as the first covenant at Sinai had been inaugurated. And as it had been declared that the servant of Jehovah would, by "pouring out his soul unto death" as a guilt offering, redeem "many," so St. Mark and St. Matthew,

by the use of the words "for many," convey to us the thought that Jesus knew He was so doing.

(5) Some critics—influenced by Schweitzer—suppose the words of St. Matthew, "I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new *with you* in my Father's kingdom," intimate that our Lord expected the immediate coming of the End and His union with His disciples at the heavenly feast of the Kingdom. In part they make this the ground for disbelieving that Jesus instituted any sacrament for constant observance in His Church. He had no thought for an intermediate period. But St. Mark, on whom St. Matthew is based, and St. Luke omit the words "with you." Without these words the saying has no suggestion of any immediate renewal of fellowship with His disciples. They only intimate that this is His last meal on earth, and that the new wine of the Kingdom lies immediately before Himself. And where the emphasis has to be laid on the particular words, we must prefer St. Mark and St. Luke in agreement to St. Matthew's version. But of the eschatology of our Lord we treat later in this volume.

Note B

On the question whether the First Church in Jerusalem called Jesus Lord

We must not, of course, ignore the position taken by critics of the school of Bousset, and others, that the term "the Lord" (κύριος) for Jesus was due to the Hellenistic Christian churches at Antioch, Damascus, Tarsus, and the like, which passed through a rapid assimilation to the Pagan mystery religions, even before St. Paul began his public ministry. These Pagan adherents of mystery religions addressed their patron gods or goddesses as Lord or Lady—Lord Hermes, Lord Serapis, Lady Cybele, etc. Thus Bousset holds that the title (or its equivalent in Aramaic) was not used in the early Jerusalem community, but was first used in these Hellenistic churches.[1]

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[1] Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, pp. 77 ff.; cf. Glover, *Conflict of Religions*, p. 356.

On the other hand, let us hear Dalman[1]: "At first the title, used in speaking to or of Jesus, was no more than the respectful designation of the Teacher on the part of His disciples. As soon as Jesus had entered into His state of kingly majesty, it became among His followers an acknowledgment of sovereignty; and when they addressed Him as the Son of God [which apparently was not commonly done in the days before St. Paul], then 'our Lord,' as applied to Jesus, was not widely separated from the same designation for God. But it must be remembered that the Aramaic-speaking Jews did not, save exceptionally, designate God as 'Lord,' so that in the Hebraist section of the Jewish Christians the expression 'Our Lord' was used in reference to Jesus only, and would be quite free from ambiguity."

The question is this, then—Was the title Maran or Lord used of Jesus by the early Jerusalem community in a sense betokening sovereignty ("Lord of all")—in a sense which, among Greek-speaking Christians a few years later easily merged into the sense of the word Κύριος used for God (Jehovah), although at present it would not have been precisely so used in Jerusalem ?

St. Luke plainly implies that it was, with the title "Christ," used by them as their special term for the exalted Jesus.[2] See Acts i 21, (?) 24, ii 36, (iv 33, v 14), vii 59, (?) 60, viii 16, ix (1), 10, 13, 15, 17, (29), (42), x 36, xi 8, 17, 20, (21), 23, (24).

There seems to me no kind of reason to doubt this, especially as St. Luke appears to be careful to avoid the title Son of God, till he comes to St. Paul. He seems to imply that the one title was, and the other was not, in use.

There are two other indications looking in the same direction.

(1) First, that even in the thoroughly Greek church of Corinth St. Paul assumes familiarity with the invocation "Maranatha," "Come, O our Lord!" in Aramaic, which means clearly that it had an Aramaic

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[1] See Dalman's *Words of Jesus*, p. 327.

[2] I have put in brackets ( ) the occasions where the word is used by St. Luke in his own person and not ascribed specially to some speaker other than himself.

origin. (The same Aramaic phrase occurs in the Didachè, which is a document (I think) quite independent of St. Paul.) Bousset admits the force of this as an argument that the title "Lord" goes back to the original Aramaic-speaking church at Jerusalem, but pleads that it is not *impossible* "that the Maranatha formula had its origin, not on the ground of the original Palestinian church, but in the bilingual region of the Hellenistic communities of Antioch, Damascus, and Tarsus itself."[1] No doubt it is possible: for we know little or nothing of these communities and their manner of speech. But the probability surely is that the Hellenistic Christian communities there talked Greek. Even in Jerusalem the names of the men chosen to minister to the Hellenists are all Greek names. And Bousset is surely mistaken in saying that St. Paul's "tradition" goes back to these Syrian communities only, and not to Jerusalem. Where St. Paul talks about the tradition concerning the Resurrection (1 Cor. xv 3), there he certainly means the tradition which he had received from the earlier apostles—*i.e.* at Jerusalem—for he ranks himself with them as "the last" and irregular apostle, and adds, "Therefore, whether it were I or they, so we preach." The tradition which he received was therefore theirs before he came on the scene. It came from Jerusalem. Again, in Rom. xv 19 St. Paul speaks of *Jerusalem* as his starting point.

(2) St. Paul was of course conscious that there were "Gods many and Lords many," but certainly nothing in his use of "Lord" as a title for Jesus Christ suggests affinities with the heathen. It was, according to St. Luke, used with special reference to the dignity of the ascended Christ and His future coming. The phrase "Maranatha," "Come, O our Lord," also suggests that. St. Paul in his (probably earliest) Epistle to the Thessalonians constantly uses it with this suggestion: the day of the Lord, the coming of the Lord, etc., see 1 Thess. ii 19, iii 13, iv 15, 16, 17, v 2; 2 Thess. i 7, ii 1, 8, 14. But this is a distinctively Jewish idea. And

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[1] P. 84. It is noteworthy that Bousset confesses "Schwieriger ist es eine Alterbestimmung für das Vorkommen des griechischen Kyriostitels in Syrien und seiner Umgebung zu gewinnen."

his characteristic phrase ἐν Κυρίῳ suggests something quite alien to the heathen cults.

On the whole, Bousset's position is singularly ill founded.

NOTE C

On the phrase of St. Paul, " Christ after the flesh."

It is difficult to feel sure what exactly St. Paul means by the words of 2 Cor. v 16 : " Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him no more." He is speaking, in a measure, generally of the ambassadors for Christ, not only of himself. That is (in part) the force of the plural " we." He is describing how the appreciation of the love of Christ involves for them death to their selfish selves, and to all the narrowness of natural affections. " To know men after the flesh " is to appraise them according to the standards of class, or race, or disposition. To " know Christ after the flesh " would be to appreciate Him as a Jew would naturally appreciate Him, as the heaven-sent Messenger who is to exalt the Jewish race and minister to Jewish pride. St. Paul had felt this pride in Christ, but before he recognized Jesus as the Christ. What he seems to mean is that all such narrow and partial prejudices have been abolished by the expulsive power of a love which is spiritual and universal. It is difficult, I acknowledge, to feel quite certain of St. Paul's meaning. But certainly he cannot mean by " knowing Christ after the flesh," knowing Him as having become really and fully human in body as well as soul. That he could never repudiate. See Dr. Menzies' commentary *in loc.*

CHAPTER IV

ST. JOHN AND THE REST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

I

THE doctrine of the divine Sonship and incarnation of Jesus Christ is given quite unmistakably in St. Paul's Epistles and the Epistle to the Hebrews, but it is given incidentally and by implication. But in St. John's Gospel, read in the light of the prologue and the conclusion,[1] it is given explicitly and directly; and the main, though not the only, object of the writing of the Gospel appears to be to affirm the doctrine with all the authority which the personal testimony of the author can give it.

I call this Gospel St. John's, and on the whole I believe it to give us at first hand the mature testimony of the son of Zebedee. But the widespread denial or doubt of his being the author, or the direct author, of the Fourth Gospel, and the consequent uncertainty about the authority to be attached to it, have seemed to make it wiser to build the structure of our argument independently of it in the first instance. So we have built it especially upon St. Mark and St. Luke, and upon the Acts, and upon St. Paul, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. But having done this we can supplement our argument with an appeal to St. John.

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[1] John i 1–18 and John xx 30. Chap. xxi is evidently an appendix, by the same author, I believe, as the rest of the book, with an addition (verses 24, 25) by his companions.

Dr. Stanton has recently, in a very careful study of the Fourth Gospel, given us a theory of what one may call "mediate Johannine authorship." The actual author was, he supposes, a younger man than the Apostle, who had gone to Asia perhaps earlier than he, but had there become intimately associated with him, and who also had independent memories of his own—"who could remember having sometimes himself seen or heard Jesus, and who felt himself possessed of a knowledge, which was at least almost immediate, of the divine revelation made in the Lord, by intimate association with His personal disciples very soon after His departure."[1] I cannot be satisfied with this theory. It seems to me impossible to harmonize with the impression made by the Fourth Gospel. I cannot doubt that it at least claims to be in its whole bulk—and the same applies to the First Epistle—a personal testimony, so personal that it must be first-hand, and I see no sufficient reason to doubt that the claim is true. But Dr. Stanton's study at least shows very cogent reasons for believing that both the narrative of the Fourth Gospel and the discourses rest upon a real apostolic experience, and I hope that critical students will heed his arguments.[1]

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[1] Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, Part iii (Cambridge, 1920), p. 281.

Since this chapter was written, I have noted that Ed. Meyer, *Ursprung*, i p. 312, treats as ridiculous any doubts that the author of the Fourth Gospel intended to represent himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" and as John the son of Zebedee. "This was the mask he assumed." He cannot understand how modern critics can have brought themselves to doubt this. Also he is confident that the author's conception of the Logos is derived from Palestinian Jewish sources (the "Memra" doctrine), and not from Greek philosophy, or Philo, though he may have known of the current Greek philosophical term (p. 318). I have also read Dr. Burney's *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford, 1922), who is (of course) insistent on its Palestinian origin, pp. 37 ff. In his opinion the author must have been an eyewitness of the events he describes—really "the disciple whom Jesus loved": but he identifies him as "John the presbyter" and not the apostle. He thinks that he must have been a Jew of Jerusalem, belonging to the priestly circle, and well trained in the Rabbinical schools, and that he wrote the Gospel in Aramaic, probably at Antioch soon after A.D. 75, before he took up his residence at Ephesus. I do not think Dr. Burney's theory is likely to find acceptance; but I am not without hopes that the essentially Palestinian, and not Hellenistic, origin and character of the Gospel, and its high value as an historical witness both to the events of our Lord's life and to His teaching, may soon come to be regarded as an "assured result" of critical enquiry.

Thus he seems to me to show convincingly that the prologue to the Gospel, though of course it stands first, is not by any means the governing factor in the whole book.[2] On the contrary, in the bulk of the book, after the prologue, there is no allusion to the doctrine of the (personal) Word of God which is the characteristic feature of the prologue, and "the word of God" is given, as in the First Epistle, only its normal meaning of the divine message.[3] Jesus there appears only under those titles which He certainly used of Himself—the Son of Man and the Son of God—or the title which was certainly ascribed to Him with His express sanction—the Christ. The substance of the book, which is of a narrative character, must, Dr. Stanton argues, be taken to represent the real experience (and the conviction based upon the experience) of an apostle or apostolic group, which was shared by or communicated to the mind of the author, supposed to be a different person. To put this experience on record was his primary object. Only at the last moment, so to speak, before he wrote his "gospel" did the current idea of the Logos (the divine Word or Reason or Power always active in the universe) suggest itself to the author as a suitable term to express the nature and functions of the Son. So he formulates his dogmatic prologue with the help of the new term with which both his Jewish training and his Asiatic experience had made him familiar. Thus the idea of the prologue must be thought of as having presented itself to his mind only after the narrative and ideas of the body of the Gospel were already formed and fixed, and, Dr. Stanton would say, after the First Epistle had been written. Further, the bulk of the Gospel must represent matter which had already become familiar in the oral instruction given to the congregations of Asiatic Christians.[1]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, chap. vi, p. 209.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 166 ff. This argument is substantially also Harnack's, see p. 167. See also D. C. Somervell, *A Short History of our Religion* (G. Bell & Son), p. 111: "A kind of preface or prologue, which may also be regarded as an epilogue or summing up of the whole matter."

[3] See John v 38, x 35, xv 25, xvii 6, 14, 17. This is also the sense of "the word" in 1 John i 2.

Dr. Stanton also indicates with admirable precision how closely akin the idea of the divine sonship of Jesus, as presented in the Fourth Gospel, is to what is found already in the foundation documents of the Synoptic Gospels[2]—to the conception of divine sonship implied in the narrative of the Temptation and presented in great sayings of our Lord which have been already examined; and how the ideas of St. John vi about Christ, as through His flesh and blood the spiritual food of the world, are really implied in the language which He is recorded to have used, in the Synoptic Gospels and by St. Paul, at the Last Supper. On such grounds Dr. Stanton argues that the idea of the divine sonship of Jesus presented in the body of the Gospel must be accepted as resting on genuine utterances of Christ, and he shows the reasonableness of believing that, if such utterances were really made as the Synoptists record, they were more frequently and more emphatically made than there appears. "It is improbable that such sayings could have been spoken, and yet have stood alone in the intercourse of Jesus with His disciples. Even in order that they might be rendered intelligible, and be duly impressed upon their minds, they would need to be repeated." Dr. Stanton also argues afresh with great force how well the Synoptic narrative can be fitted into the framework of the story of the Fourth Gospel, and I should add how much on the whole it gains thereby in intelligibility.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 50, 282.

[2] Pp. 267 ff. Cp. Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus*, p. 302: "If the first evangelist himself wrote the passage [St. Matt. xi 25–7] as we read it, then even with the most cautious interpretation of the passage, his own Christology approached very nearly to that of the Johannine writings in one of the most important points." In view of the fact that the saying occurs in substantially identical form in St. Matthew and St. Luke, and must therefore have so occurred in Q, we should substitute for Harnack's opening words something of this kind—"If, as we cannot doubt, the first recorder of our Lord's words, whose written record lies behind all our present Gospels, wrote the passage as we read it," etc.

I have written so much by way of preface because writers are apt to assume that, if they reject the direct authorship of St. John the son of Zebedee, they can dispose of the whole Gospel as a work of pious imagination. I do not agree that the direct authorship can be rejected. But what I think is a prejudice against the authorship of St. John is still a very strong prejudice, and it seems to me very important that the world which especially claims to be critical should remember that it has still to reckon with the Fourth Gospel, both as to its incidents and its teaching, as making an historical claim which cannot be ignored, and representing a tradition quite independent of St. Paul.

I always find myself impressed by the fact that this Gospel four times calls attention to occasions when the disciples failed to apprehend at the time the meaning of some word of Jesus, and only afterwards in retrospect perceived what it had really been,[1] and also calls attention to our Lord's having promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit, whom they were to receive after His departure, would so

[1] John ii 22, viii 27, x 6, xii 16.

act within their minds as not only to interpret what they remembered of His words, but also to bring out of their "subconscious selves" what had been forgotten or ignored.[1] That such should have been their experience seems to me to be thoroughly in accordance with human nature.[2] Thus I am disposed to believe that the record of our Lord's words contained in the common matter of St. Matthew and St. Luke represents the first memory of what He had said, more or less exactly as He said it, but the Fourth Gospel gives us what had been a gradually growing recollection in the mind of St. John and probably of others, viz. that the sayings of our Lord about His divine sonship had been more frequent and more emphatic than the earliest record had implied.

Here in the Fourth Gospel, then, St. John, presupposing the Synoptic record, supplements it with incidents and discourses especially intended to bear on the point of divine sonship.[3] Thus, apart from the comments of the Evangelist, so far as they can be kept distinct from the words of Christ, we have a discourse of Christ (cap. v) in which He asserts at once, as always, His subordination to the Father, but also His constant association with Him in His works, in such general sense as, perhaps, suggests His co-operation with the Father even in the processes of nature. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (v 17–18). The co-operation actually asserted (verses 19–29) is something quite transcending the human level, though He who so works is called "Son of Man." That is to say, there is asserted a divine sonship belonging to the Son of Man under human conditions, which yet can only belong to the man, because He had come into His manhood out of a pre-existence in God.[1] This is affirmed again and again in the next chapter (vi 38, 41, 62), as also that He is to return, in His manhood, to the heaven whence He came. Again in the discourse of chapter viii this pre-existent sonship is affirmed and identified with the eternal existence of God (verse 58). Again the Son and the Father are declared to be one thing (x 30) and, as has been explained above,[2] I do not think the apparent minimizing of this claim (verses 33–36), when the Jews rightly understood it as a claim of Godhead, can be taken at its face value. The almost startling incompatibility of the minimizing explanation of

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[1] xiv 26, cf. xiii 7.

[2] D. C. Somervell, *op. cit.*, p. 108, quotes from Mr. Bruce Glasier's memoir of William Morris, written twenty-five years after his death, the following: "I have found that my memory is, on many occasions, subject to what seems to be a sort of 'illumination' or 'inspiration.' Thus when I have fixed my mind on one, say, of the incidents recalled in these chapters, the scene has begun to unfold itself, perhaps slowly at first, but afterwards rapidly and clearly. Meditating upon it for a time, I have lifted my pen and begun to write. Then to my surprise the conversations, long buried or hidden somewhere in my memory, have come back to me sometimes with the greatest fulness, word for word, as we say. Nay, not only the words, but the tones, the pauses and the gestures of the speaker." My own belief is that in the Fourth Gospel the memory of incidents and things seen is precise and clear cut. But the memory of words, though true in its ultimate substance, has become in its form transmuted and sometimes enlarged by meditation. In almost all cases, however, clear-cut sayings of our Lord which are original and verbally genuine can be discerned.

[3] See xx 31.

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[1] There are two assertions by our Lord that "the Father" is "greater" than He (x 29, xiv 28). It has been long a matter of controversy in the Church (see Westcott's note) whether this superior "greatness" of the Father to the Son refers to the Godhead of the Son or to His manhood. It seems to me that the words—so far like the words of our Lord recorded in St. Mark and St. Matthew, asserting the Son's ignorance of the day and hour of the "end of the world"—are spoken by the Son in His manhood and with direct reference to His present human state, but that it is not an *adequate* explanation of them to say that they describe Him as "inferior to the Father as touching His manhood." For they refer not to His manhood merely (which, according to the teaching of the Church, had no separate personal existence) but to Himself. They seem to me to describe an inferiority which the incarnation of the Son has (so to speak) intensified, but which depends upon and postulates an eternal subordination.

[2] See pp. 324 f.

His divine sonship with the general argument of the Gospel does indeed give us a guarantee that the Evangelist would not have preserved the words unless he had felt sure that they were really spoken by our Lord; but I think they must be interpreted, not as minimizing His meaning, but as intended to force the Jews to consider that, according to their authoritative Scriptures, something much less than Godhead would justify a claim of divine sonship in some sense. They could not, therefore, dispose of His inconvenient claim upon them merely by repudiating its full implication. More than this kind of meaning cannot be attached to this strange and isolated passage consistently with the constant tenor of the Gospel as a whole.[1]

In the last discourses immediately before His passion our Lord is constantly represented as one who was conscious of having in one sense come from God—but without thereby leaving God, for He was still abiding in the Father and the Father in Him, and to see Him is to see the Father—and as being immediately to return to God to resume an interrupted glory and to fulfil the purpose of His mission by the bestowal of the Spirit, whom the Father is to send in His name and at His hands.[2] We shall have to return upon these last discourses about the Holy Spirit. All that we need now to do is to assure ourselves that in them, as in the rest of the Gospel, what we are presented with, in our Lord's words, is an indisputable and constantly reiterated assertion on His part of divine sonship. This is primarily an assertion of what He was then and there in His manhood; but it is also frequently and plainly implied that He has been through the ages the Son with the Father, dependent upon Him for His very life, but also belonging essentially to the divine being; that He came into the world voluntarily in fulfilment of a divine mission of redemption—to accept death at the hands of men for their salvation—and that He was about to resume an interrupted glory on His return to heaven as Son of Man, carrying thither His manhood to become through the Spirit, whom He is to send down from the Father upon His chosen body, the fountain head of a new life.

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[1] See pp. 482–3.

[2] xiv 16, 26, xv 26, xvi 7.

Now I do not say that the author of the Fourth Gospel was unacquainted with St. Paul. That can hardly have been the case. But I say that all this body of teaching appears to have grown quite independently of St. Paul. It has its own independent phraseology and characteristic ideas, notably the dominant ideas of "light" and "life" and "truth," of the conflict of belief and unbelief, of judgment perpetually being enacted, and of eternal life already enjoyed. And it must be held to rest upon the foundation of a real tradition of the words of Jesus in the churches of Asia and in the school of St. John; for myself I go farther, and believe it records both the real memory and the deep meditation of St. John as given us by himself. And I do not see any point at which the record of the Fourth Gospel—apart from the prologue, which has still to be considered—suggests the influence of the current Logos-philosophy of the Hellenistic world. There is really nothing needed to account for it but the Old Testament and the actual life and teaching of Christ.

The outcome of this experience upon the author has been to generate an idea of Christ as to the nature of which he leaves us in no doubt. He believed that Christ, the Son of Man, was the eternal Son of God, who is very God. He identifies Him with the Jehovah of the Old Testament, for he speaks of Isaiah as having seen His (Christ's) "glory" when, in his vision in the temple, he saw the form of Jehovah sitting upon His throne[1]; and he represents the penitent Thomas as calling the risen Jesus "my Lord and my God." Also he plainly believes the eternal Son of God to have come or been sent by God into the world as man—the Son of Man. But there does not seem to me to be any trace of a belief in a pre-existent man or Son of Man. It was the pre-existent Son of God who was sent into the world (iii 16-18) as Son of Man, and who after His death and resurrection carried that manhood into heaven[2] in pursuance of a divine purpose of redemption. This alone gives a fair interpretation of the language of the Gospel as a whole. The author's mind is preoccupied with making it evident that Jesus was really the Son of God. But he leaves us in no doubt as to the reality of His manhood, both bodily and spiritual.[3]

All this belief of "St. John" concerning Jesus grew, I believe with Dr. Stanton, on the ground of a real historical tradition or (I should say) of a real memory, and in substance antedates the prologue. It is with this belief already in his mind that, when he came to give his Gospel written form, he found in the current idea of *the Logos* (the word or reason of God) the best vehicle for expressing his doctrine in a concise and dogmatic shape, such as would arrest the imagination and conciliate the sympathies of the world for which he was writing. For his world was plainly one deeply liable at the moment to be diverted by the rising tide of "Gnostic" speculation from the belief in the Incarnation, or (what is the same thing) the belief that Jesus is the Son of God. It appears indeed very vividly in St. John's Epistles that his world was a troubled world—a world full of movements calculated to mislead and destroy this fundamental faith.[1] And all these movements would recognize in the term "the Logos" one of their keywords or favourite thoughts.

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[1] See Burney, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[2] In vi 62 our Lord is represented as anticipating His ascension: "What and if ye see the Son of man ascending up where he was before." In iii 13 I think we must suppose that we have a reflection of the Evangelist and not a word of Christ. The ascension has plainly already occurred. The sense in which "the Son of man came down from heaven" is defined by the verses which follow. It is in the sense that "God sent his Son" (verses 16 and 17) and His "only begotten Son" (verse 18) into the world to save the world and that He came to save the world as man, the Son of Man.

[3] No doubt the reality of our Lord's manhood physically is what he sees represented symbolically in the blood from His pierced side, xix 34–5. Cf. 1 John v 6; see my *Exposition of St. John's Epistles, in loc.*; see John iv 6 and xix 28 for His being tired and thirsty. Dr. Burkitt (*The Gospel History and its Transmission*, p. 233) has the courage to say that "In no early Christian document is the real humanity of Jesus so emphasized as in the Fourth Gospel." The reality of His human spirit and human sympathy appears in xi 33–8 xii 27, xiii 1, etc.

For the Hellenistic world was possessed with the idea of a Law or Force or Mind moulding and governing the universe. This was the God immanent in the world, "in whom we live and move and have our being," of which the mind or spirit in each man was a minute portion. This current belief was of Stoic origin. Obviously, like the modern more or less pantheistic utterances of Shelley and Goethe and Wordsworth (in his earlier phase), this philosophy responds to a widespread demand of the human spirit that it shall be able to see God in all things and to feel its own kinship with the divine. Before St. John's days it had taken many different forms and moved in many different directions. Thus a Jew of Alexandria before our Lord's time, in the Book of

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[1] The signs of trouble are apparent in 1 John i 18–26, iv 1–6, v 6–10; 2 John 7–11. The precise nature of this hostile movement I have sought to describe in *Epistles of St. John*, pp. 109 ff., 165 ff., 170 f., 191 ff. It denied St. John's central faith, viz. that in the man Jesus the highest and lowest had become one—that the man Jesus was really and personally the Son of God come in the flesh, and it denied this by separating the man Jesus from the divine Christ, who was represented only as coming down upon the man at His baptism out of the heavenly regions and leaving Him before His passion.

Wisdom, had assimilated this Hellenistic belief in a divine energy and law and spirit, immanent in the world, and had identified it with the Wisdom of God. As we have already seen,[1] in this beautiful little book Wisdom appears as something more than a mere personification of a divine quality. It is a living being, as well as a pervasive force throughout the whole universe. It is a spirit expressive of the inner being of God, and it is the revealer of God in nature and to man through His saints and prophets. Here we have an intermediate being presented to us—intermediate between the supreme and inaccessible God and the material world. And it is a very active power, which later on in the book, under the name of the Word of God, is described as leaping down from the divine throne to work His miracles of judgment upon Egypt, " a stern warrior into the midst of the doomed land." [2]

Later Philo, the Jew of Alexandria, elaborated this conception of an intermediate being, whether we are to call it person or no, who as the divine *Logos* is not only the immanent reason and law of the world, but also the active instrument of God and the revealer of His mysterious being. This idea of an intermediate being between the high and inaccessible God and the material world became exceedingly popular in all sorts of forms. But outside the influence of the Jewish religion it is almost always associated with the notion of matter as essentially evil, so that the supreme God could not be conceived of as either responsible for creating it, or enduring to come in immediate contact with it. Nor was the human imagination generally content with one divine or semi-divine intermediate being. The world teemed with beliefs in mysterious " powers " or " Gods," who in various ways represented a divine activity for man's enlightenment and salvation. These powers were identified with the Gods of old popular beliefs —for example with the old nature spirits who died in the decay of autumn and lived again in the rebirth of spring. These now reappear as Saviour Gods, who will redeem men from the endless flux and misery of material life and bring them by a new birth, symbolically represented, into the security of the heavenly life beyond death. All these kinds of beliefs—whether in the *Logos* as immanent mind or spirit of the universe, or in the *Logos* as an intermediate being between the supreme God and the material world, or in divine persons, vaguely conceived, through whom, by mysteries of initiation and sacramental participation, men can be saved from the miseries and fluctuations of material life and brought into the upper world of light and eternity —were already at work in the Hellenistic world, that is the world of mixed Oriental and Greek culture, when Christianity came into it. Obviously, this class of beliefs provided a condition in the souls of men, or a spiritual atmosphere, favourable to the spread of any religion of redemption or salvation, like the Christian religion. Obviously also, with its innumerable intermediate beings, or its one *Logos* neither really God nor really man, and with its almost universal belief in matter as so evil a thing that the high God could not directly touch it or be responsible for it, this whole class of beliefs was calculated, in its many movements, to pervert fundamentally the Christian tradition.

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[1] Above, p. 388.

[2] Wisd. xviii 15.

This St. John sees very vividly. Thus in the Prologue to his Gospel he accepts the term *Logos*, which has both its Hellenistic meanings such as we have been describing, and also its properly Jewish meaning, which we are very familiar with in the Old Testament—" the word of God " by which He created the world and proceeds forth to govern His people through His prophets, and to chastise the rebellious with His judgments. He seems to say to the Jewish world—" All that you have believed about God as proceeding forth by His word to create and govern nature, and to reveal Himself to man by His prophets, belongs to Jesus, and in Him is consummated." And to the Hellenistic world—" All that you have imagined of a divine activity in the world and a divine spirit, all that you have dreamed of a divine mediator or mediators between the highest and the lowest, and of mysteries of salvation, here have their justification and fulfilment, and also their correction."

Now I will attempt to paraphrase the prologue so as to bring out its general meaning,[1] referring from time to time to sayings in the Gospel which illustrate it.

At the beginning, before the world was, you must think of God as having already with Him His *Word*, the expression of Himself, God with God; and the whole world of created things without exception was brought into being through this Word. Nor must you think of the Word as a mere quality of God, but as a person with God, in whom is life in its fulness. [As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.] Thus as all the life in creation is from Him, so specially is the life of men. To them as rational beings life is given in their reason and conscience as light—that is as illumination and guidance, as a " way " to be chosen and followed. So the light is given to all men. But men have loved darkness rather than light. They have followed their own desires and fancies instead of the divine leading. That is what we see in the world at large. The light is shining in the darkness and the darkness has not admitted it.[2] So it was when John the Baptist came, who was not indeed the Light, but was a witness to the Light, calling men to faith in Another. And all the time that Other, the Word who is the True Light, lightening every man who comes into the world, was coming, and at last He came. The world to which He came was His own, as He was the creator of it, but it would not recognize Him. He came thither as to His own possession, but men—His own—refused to receive Him. That is, most men refused, but there were some who welcomed Him, and they received from Him the title to sonship of God, as all men receive it who believe on Him as He has disclosed Himself. This sonship is given by a new birth, not by the methods of natural birth. It proceeds not from mixture of human seeds, nor from carnal desire, nor from the will of a man, but purely from the will of God.[1] And all this coming of God into the world to enlighten and to regenerate those who would receive Him reached its fulfilment thus—the Word became flesh. Our creator and illuminator took our nature and tabernacled among us, as the glory of God tabernacled among the people of Israel[2]; and we His witnesses who speak to you beheld His glory, beholding God in Him, as men see a father in his only son, full of the divine favour and truth. Here was one greater than John the Baptist and prior to him, as he himself bore witness : here was one who could do and give what Moses could not do or give. For the vision of God has been always unattainable to men : but here God only-begotten, the Son, whose place is in the bosom of the Father, hath interpreted Him [as He said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"].

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[1] Where the reading is disputed, or the punctuation, I simply take what seems to me the better reading or stopping.

[2] Or " nevertheless the darkness has never overwhelmed the light."

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[1] As will be seen, the phrases used, "not from bloods (i.e. the mingling of human seeds) nor carnal desire, nor the will of a man (a husband)," describe exactly the negative conditions of the human birth of Jesus of a virgin mother. Many of the early Fathers in fact had the singular, not the plural, in their text of St. John. They read it "who *was* born." Some modern scholars, including Dr. Inge and Dr. Burney, accept this as the original reading. I do not think this is probable. But I think it is certain (with Dr. Chase, Zahn and others) that the passage describes our new birth to divine sonship after the pattern picture of His birth who alone is in the fullest sense Son of God: so that the reader is reminded of a begetting and birth which took place without carnal impulse or the act of any man.

[2] In this phrase—"the *Word* was made flesh and *tabernacled* among us, and we beheld His *glory*"—St. John has brought together three characteristic Jewish ideas, which the Aramaic Targums lead us to believe were already in current use: *Memra* (the Word of God, constantly used to express God in action), *Shekinta* or (Hebrew) *Shekinah* (the tabernacle or abiding-place of God among His people, as above the cherubim in the Holy of Holies, and on special occasions besides), and *Yekara* (the glory which

It is after this preface in which "the writer plainly announces the full and ultimate conclusion of beliefs to which he has come,"[1] that he begins his story.

There is one point on which I ought to make my meaning clear before leaving St. John.

It has been for long a matter of ceaseless discussion whether St. John's term *the Logos* is derived from the Hebrew and Palestinian tradition or from the Hellenistic world of thought. I cannot but believe that in St. John's own mind its origin and meaning are fundamentally Palestinian and Jewish. I do not deny that he chooses the term as one familiar to the Hellenists. That I have already said. I do not suppose he had ever read Philo or any Stoic philosopher. But the idea and the word "Logos" were in the atmosphere of the Asiatic churches and St. John—with great discernment as it appeared—sees in it the best word to interpret to his generation the idea of the Son of God and His relation to the world both before and in the Incarnation. Nevertheless his own mind accepts and uses the term rather

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under the cloudy veil shows itself in flashes). See below, p. 424, and cf. Burney, pp. 35 ff.

[1] See Dr. H. S. Holland, *The Philosophy of Faith and the Fourth Gospel*, p. 262. I was delighted to read in Dr. Armitage Robinson's recent lecture on the Fourth Gospel, given in Manchester Cathedral, an enthusiastic appreciation of the value of Dr. Holland's interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.

in the Hebrew than in the Greek sense. Not exclusively, but on the whole and first of all, the term in Greek meant *Reason*: while in the Old Testament the Word of God meant not reason at all, but the *utterance* of the will of God, or the *expression* of His mind. So as applied by St. John to the Son it means at bottom much what St. Paul meant by calling Him God's "image," and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews by calling Him "the expression of his substance."

In the Targums, or Aramaic interpretations of the Hebrew Scriptures, "the Word (Memra) of God" is constantly used where the Hebrew speaks simply of God.[1] The "Word of God" is almost "God in action." In this sense, as has been already mentioned, "the Word of God" occurs in the Book of Wisdom,[2] and in a closely allied sense "the Wisdom of God." Dr. Rendel Harris[3] has shown how closely the phrases of St. John's prologue are modelled upon the description of the activity of the divine Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs and, still more, in the Book of Wisdom. St. John was probably acquainted with the Targums, which were already assuming fixed form, and with Proverbs and Wisdom. So it was from Jewish sources that he derived the term which he chose to express the scope and meaning of the Incarnation. But we cannot doubt that its familiar use in the Hellenic world, of which he cannot have been ignorant, partly determined his choice. In the generation after St. John it was chiefly in its Hellenic sense that the phrase came to be understood. But it was not so in St. John's mind, nor did his Gospel grow on any Hellenic soil.[4]

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[1] See the passages quoted by Burney, *op. cit.* p. 38.

[2] Wisd. xviii 15, see above, p. 413.

[3] See his *Prologue to St. John's Gospel*, Camb., 1917.

[4] For the argument of Reitzenstein, who would trace the whole intellectual and mystical substance of the Fourth Gospel to a Hellenistic (Graeco-Egyptian) source, see appended note at the end of the chapter, p. 429.

II

We have passed in review the Synoptic Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles of St. Paul and that to the Hebrews, and the Gospel of St. John. In these Epistles and in the Fourth Gospel we have found a clearly expressed doctrine of Jesus Christ as an eternal and divine person, the Son of God, the divine agent in the creation and maintenance of all that exists, who at the last was incarnate for man's redemption in Jesus Christ. We have found the grounds of this doctrine in the Synoptic Gospels. Nothing else can explain the impression made by Jesus upon the disciples and His own language about His divine sonship. In the first part of the Acts, however, before the appearance of St. Paul upon the scene, we seem to find a situation in which Jesus, as the exalted and glorified Christ, is indeed treated as divine and worshipped as divine, but in which no question of pre-existence or divine sonship seems to be entertained. This situation is often represented as if the first disciples regarded Christ as strictly only a human person who, as Christ, had been exalted to divine honours on the throne of God, or deified. This is what is called the "adoptionist" theory of Christ's divinity. It played its part as a heresy among Jewish Christians in the second century under the name of Ebionism, and it was the clearly defined doctrine of Paul of Samosata in the third. But it is quite misleading so to describe the state of mind of the first Christians in Jerusalem. Ebionism, or Paul of Samosata's doctrine, was a clearly held theory. On the other hand, the Jerusalem church appears to have existed for some years without any theory, simply because their minds were absorbed in the sense of the glorified Christ, the Lord of all, at the right hand of God, and of the Spirit whom He had given them. Their creed was, "Jesus is Christ and Lord. He has given us the Spirit." But when, after a few years, the converted Saul felt at once the pressing need of a theory of Christ's person, and found this need satisfied in Christ's own language about His sonship to God, and so proclaimed the doctrine of the Incarnation, his words excited no dismay or dispute. Universally, as far as we know, the churches accepted his position. This means that, though hitherto they had not felt the pressure of the need for an explanation of their worship of the glorified Christ, yet, when once it was felt, they found it not in adoptionism but in the theory of the Incarnation; and they found the warrant of this doctrine in Christ's own language. I cannot help thinking that in the memory and mind of some at least of the apostolic company this explanation must have been fermenting under the surface of their public witness before St. Paul appeared; otherwise his teaching would have excited more comment. The celebration of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, as well as the memory of some of His words, must, one would think, inevitably have led to such thoughts. What remains for us to do is to examine the rest of the documents of the New Testament, those especially which appear to be most independent of St. Paul, to see whether "adoptionism" is to be found in them, and first of all the most non-Pauline of all the books, the greatest expression of the spirit of Jewish apocalypse, the "Revelation of John the Divine."

(*a*) *The Revelation*

There is no more thrilling book in the literature of the world than the Apocalypse of John. It is this quite independently of the question who John the Seer is, whether the "Son of Thunder," the apostle, or the supposed "Presbyter John," or whether the visions belong to an earlier or later date in the first century—problems which we need not discuss.[1] And it is also the most Judaic book in the New Testament, beyond all question. The God who there confronts us in all His majesty and all His tremendous activity of judgment, is the God of the Old Testament in His most fearful aspects. There are touches of tenderness, but they are rare. If this book is really written by the author of the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John, then we must suppose that the acute crisis of persecution forced the Apostle to concentrate his mind for the time on that part of the truth about God which the Son of Thunder had never forgotten, but which had been pressed into the background by the fresher revelation of divine, self-sacrificing love. Now the tremendous God of Justice—God the almighty and God the avenger—occupies the whole stage. But with one startling difference. The One God of this uncompromising Jewish monotheism has a partner on His throne. It is now "the throne of God and of the Lamb," and the adoration of the whole world is directed towards His partner as to Him. There can be no question that Jesus, "the Lamb as it had been slain," is on the throne of God and treated as God. And there can be no doubt that this exaltation of the Lamb to divine functions and honours is explained on the principle of merit. It is the reward of His supreme self-sacrifice.[2] All this suggests the "Adoptionist" Christology sometimes ascribed to the Apocalypse. But we are pulled up short at the idea of such an ascription. Is it conceivable that in a book so intensely Jewish another should be equalled to God? Has God, the God of Israel, forgotten His ancient "jealousy"?

[1] Of course Burney's theory of the Aramaic original of the Gospel enables him easily to assign Gospel and Apocalypse to the same person—the presbyter John—for the Greek of the Gospel is not his Greek, but a translation.

[2] See Rev. v.

There is, we notice, twice in the book, when John would "worship" an angelic messenger, a stern repudiation on his part of the homage which only God must receive.[1] Well then, we are bound to be, as I say, pulled up short at the proposed intrusion into the heart of Judaism of an idea so alien to it. We look again at the language of the Apocalypse. Certainly there is no theory of Christ's person there. But there are two points which are enlightening.

(1) That the great phrase (in part taken from Isaiah), which is here heard from the lips of God to signify His activity from the beginning of time to the end of it—"the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last"—is also heard from the lips of Christ.[2] This means unmistakably that the association of Christ in the activity of God had no beginning in time. No doubt it was only *in time* that He was glorified as God in His manhood. But what rendered that possible was His co-existence and co-ordination with God from the beginning.

(2) Such also is the lesson of the figure whose name is called the Word of God.[3] This surely is an intensely Jewish phrase. "The Word" here is not, I think, used as in the prologue to the Gospel. But it indicates something intensely active and energetic. It reminds us of the startling simile in the Book of Wisdom, already referred to more than once, where the Word of God is figured as a warrior leaping off His divine throne to rush in a moment to execute divine justice. It is the activity of God personified, as He has shown Himself in the government of the world. But we cannot question that the figure on the horse in the Apocalypse is Christ,[4] and this also means that the seer of the Apocalypse identified Jesus the Christ with the

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[1] xix 10, xxii 9, and contrast i 17.

[2] See i 8, xxi 6, on the lips of God, cf. Is. xli 4, xliii 10, xliv 6. On the lips of Christ, i 17, ii 8, xxii 13.

[3] xix 11–16.

[4] See Swete's and Charles' notes on the passage.

divine warrior of the Old Testament, that is with God the world ruler. Decisively then, we must say that the theology of the Apocalypse is not adoptionist. The person who is Jesus existed from the beginning with God and in God.

(*b*) *The Epistle of James*

When we pass to the Epistle of James we pass to another deeply Judaic document. And it is, as concerns both its origin and its date, a rather mysterious document, though, on the whole, I think we may still assign it to "the Lord's brother," and date it accordingly before he was executed (as Josephus tells us) in Jerusalem, under Annas the Younger, the Jewish High Priest, in A.D. 62. As to its spiritual and moral value, it speaks for itself as plainly as any document of the New Testament. It is full of the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, and no less clearly of the spirit of the ancient prophets and the Wisdom literature. Theologically there is very little in it that is specifically Christian as distinct from what is Jewish. It is severely monotheist.[1] There is also plainly no trace of St. Paul's influence, and the writer appears to combat, not St. Paul's doctrine of justification, as written in his Epistles, but some perverted version of it.[2] His main interest is, I think, rightly interpreted by Hort. It is in the ideal for man disclosed by the word of God at his creation, to which his conscience bears witness, and which it is God's present purpose that he should recover. "Grace," St. James would say, "is not contrary to nature, but the restoration of nature."

As to the person of Christ, with which alone we are here concerned, there are three indications of St. James's mind. (1) In his initial greeting to his

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[1] ii 19, iv 12.

[2] Fundamentally St. James' doctrine of justification is easily harmonized with St. Paul's

Jewish readers he couples the Lord Jesus Christ with God as He whose servant or slave he is; and the more we think of this familiar phrase the more fully it seems to involve the deity of Jesus, when it is used by a faithful Jew; for it means that he can surrender himself as wholly to Jesus as to God, and that, in fact, the one surrender involves the other. (2) At the end of the Epistle he speaks in one group of connected sentences of the "coming (*parousia*) of the Lord" (twice), of "the name of the Lord" in which the prophets spoke; and of "the end of the Lord," that is, His final dealings with Job.[1] Now the first phrase must refer to the Lord Jesus[2] and the second and third to the Lord Jehovah. But no one could use the same name thrice in such intimate connection without practical identification of the Lordship referred to in each case. (3) There is a very interesting phrase which may be paraphrased thus[3]: "My brethren, can you, while you keep showing respect of persons, really hold the faith of (or 'in') our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glory?" Let us examine the phrase.

The Jews spoke much of the glory of Jehovah. And in the latter days of Israel's religion, when the dread prevailed of speaking of Jehovah at all, or of connecting Him closely with earthly things, they often—in the Aramaic, which had taken the place of the old Hebrew—spoke of His *Word* [Memra], or His *Glory* [Yekara], or His *abiding* [Shekintah or Shekinah], for reverence sake, instead of speaking of Himself. So we find it in the Aramaic interpretations of the Hebrew Scripture, which are called Targums, and which were no doubt, if still unwritten, yet in familiar use in our Lord's day. "The term [Shekinah]," says Dr. Box,[4] "together with 'the

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[1] v 7–11. [2] So directly after (v 14) must "the name of the Lord."

[3] ii 1, following Hort.

[4] Hastings' *Dict. of Christ and the Gospels, s.v.* Shekinah.

Glory' and 'the Word,' is used in the Targums as an indirect expression in place of God. It denotes God's visible presence and glorious manifestation, which dwells among men, the localized presence of the Deity. . . . The visible Shekinah, though distinct from the glory, is associated in the closest way with it. It was conceived of as the centre or source from which the glory radiated." We understand the idea, if we think of the words "the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud" or—the constantly repeated phrase—"the Lord of Hosts which dwelleth between (or 'sitteth upon') the cherubim," or "the glory of the Lord filled the house" (Solomon's temple), or the phrase of the son of Sirach concerning Ezekiel's vision: "the vision of glory, which God showed him upon the chariot of the cherubim."[1] This thought often explains uses of "glory" in the New Testament, as when "the glory" is reckoned by St. Paul among the privileges of Israel,[2] or Stephen speaks of "the God of the glory,"[3] or the Epistle to the Hebrews of "the cherubim of glory." It refers to the manifested or localized presence of God. Thus either "the Shekinah" or "the Glory" would be for a Christian Jew a natural expression for our Lord, conceived of as the visible manifestation of God among men. Thus when St. John says "The *Word* was made flesh and *tabernacled* among us, and we beheld his *glory*," he seems, as has already been suggested, to be using all three current Jewish expressions (Memra, Shekinah, Yekara) for the Incarnate. And when St. Peter speaks of "the spirit of the Glory and the spirit of God," he seems to be using "the Glory" as a name of Christ.[4] And

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[1] Exod. xvi 10, xxv 22, Numb. vii 89, 1 Sam. iv 4, 2 Sam. vi 2, 1 Kings viii 11, Ecclus. xlix 8.

[2] Rom. ix 4.

[3] Acts vii 2.

[4] 1 Pet. iv 14; cf. 1 Cor. ii 8. Hort and Parry are possibly right in rendering Tit. ii 13 "The manifestation of the Glory of our great God and Saviour, that is Jesus Christ."

I think Dr. Hort must be right in so interpreting it here in St. James. He calls the Lord Jesus Christ the Glory, *i.e.* the visible manifestation of God among men; and he would shame those whom he is addressing out of showing undue respect for wealthy persons by reminding them that "the Glory" dwelt among men in the guise of a poor man. On the whole, then, though James is almost wholly ethical in his interests and not theological, I think he indicates that, had he been bound to express himself, it would have been in the phraseology of St. Paul or St. John. The presence of his Epistle in the New Testament may be said to justify a Christianity that is almost purely ethical in its interests, but not an adoptionist Christology.

The Epistle of Jude, "the brother of James," is again deeply Jewish, though the Judaism is of a more apocalyptic type, and it is also predominantly ethical. "The faith once for all delivered to the saints" for which he pleaded must have been a faith which laid its stress on morals. But he seems to show much more affinity than James with St. Paul's language. "But ye beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" is very Pauline phraseology. And "our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ," is hardly compatible with any lower Christology than his.

(*c*) *The First Epistle of Peter*

This Epistle must be taken on strong external evidence as authentic, and on the internal evidence as written by Peter from Rome, which he calls Babylon, no doubt very shortly before his martyrdom. It is a beautiful and gracious document, a real treasure-house of ethical and spiritual teaching, very strongly reminiscent of the Gospels and very closely akin to St. Paul's ethical teaching. In fact the Epistle bears such unmistakable suggestions of the influence of the Epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians, that we do not expect to find in it any different theology. St. Peter is plainly at one with St. Paul.

The Epistle is written to men and women—obviously Gentiles in the main—who have been redeemed by God's infinite mercy out of a corrupt world and a most evil tradition into "the brotherhood"—the elect body, the only true Israel, royal and sacerdotal. This brotherhood is now exposed to obloquy and persecution and is to expect the hand of judgment more and more severely; but it is to bear it joyfully and charitably, looking forward to the radiant glory in store for them, when the risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ is revealed. He is now at the right hand of God, above all angels and spiritual powers, unseen but the object of their exultant faith. But He is to come. He is at hand to accomplish the judgment of God and the glory of His people. Thus the main stress, as in St. Peter's preaching in the Acts, is on the Lordship of Jesus at the right hand of God and on His coming.

This passionate faith in Him and expectation of His coming is the basis of an intensely other-worldly outlook, but it is the basis none the less of a conception of a social life to be lived in this world which is to compel the attention of those who are without the elect body. Besides the emphasis laid on the Coming in Glory there is strong emphasis on the present redemption from the evil world and atonement with God which has been wrought by Christ through His vicarious sacrifice and blood-shedding.[1] We notice the phrase "through Christ," which implies His mediatorship,[2] and the phrase "in Christ,"[3] which here, as in St. Paul, implies His universal spiritual presence. Again the Lordship of Jesus has phrases applied to it from the Old Testament ("The Lord is gracious," "sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts") which were written of Jehovah, the Lord of hosts.[1] Once more it is probable that in the phrase "the spirit of the glory and the spirit of God" (iv 14) Christ is described as "the Glory," that is the manifested presence of God—the phrase which we have just considered in connection with St. James.

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[1] i 18–21, ii 21 ff., iii 16.

[2] ii 5, iv 11.

[3] iii 16, v 10, 14.

When the question is asked whether Peter indicates the pre-existence of Christ, I think the answer is that he seems to *indicate* it, when he calls the spirit in the old prophets "the Spirit of Christ," and also when he is talking about the death of Christ and the condition and activity of His disembodied spirit. St. Peter speaks very clearly of the (human) spirit of Jesus as separated from the body in death, and of its activity in the unseen world; and he seems to speak of Christ—the person—as something distinct from the human spirit in which He was acting. He went among the dead, without His human body, in respect of which He was dead, but in His human spirit, which was quickened to a new life.[2]

On the whole I think this Epistle indicates a mind predominantly ethical and practical and not theological. But also a mind which was at one with the theology of St. Paul in its main lines.

. . . . .

The conclusion which we are bound to reach is that in St. Paul's Epistles and in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in St. John we get a definite and explicit theology of the Person of Christ as the divine Son incarnate. The different writers have each of them his own point of view, but on the whole their theology is identical. There are other documents of the New Testament which, taken by themselves, give us no clear theology of Christ's person, but there is nothing in the New Testament which indicates a rival theology to St. Paul's, or what was later called an adoptionist Christology. Such a Christology did appear in the second century in the Jewish Ebionites and later in Paul of Samosata. But it must be held to represent a falling away from the standpoint which is either energetically maintained or implied in all the documents of the New Testament. We cannot read the Epistle to the Hebrews—which represents to us among a group of Jewish Christians a "longing, lingering look behind," and a movement back to the old Judaism —without feeling that a half-instructed Jewish Christianity must have existed fairly commonly, and most probably would have existed in Palestine, which would be very liable to relapse. Accordingly, it is no surprise to find that a generation later than the New Testament times such a relapse has occurred, and that, outside the main streams of Christian life, there are Christians who hold Christ for a mere man, assumed by God. But we do not find that position in the New Testament.

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[1] iii 15 (see Is. viii 12–13) and ii 3 (see Ps. xxxiv 8).

[2] iii 18–19. This is a point made by Dr. Chase (see Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, iii 793). But I cannot agree with him that i 11 does not seem to imply a pre-existent Christ.

NOTE TO P. 418

Our studious friends, whose intellectual home is with the German critics, have lately been murmuring in our ears the name of the Strassburg scholar and philologist, Richard Reitzenstein, as of one whose theories supply a new and powerful explanation of the real origin of Christian ideas and especially of "Johannine" ideas. Reitzenstein[1] does in effect suggest that the source of the characteristic Johannine ideas and of much else in the New Testament is to be found in the earliest documents of the Hermetic literature, which he dates from the first century of our era. The Hermetic literature he regards as representing a religious community which had its source in the identification of Hermes with the Logos as the revealer of divine wisdom, and with the Egyptian god Thot, venerated as the founder of Egyptian wisdom. Hitherto the Hermetic books—the revelations of Hermes Trismegistus—have been regarded as an example of Graeco-Egyptian syncretism, with Jewish and Christian elements at work in it, belonging to the third century, and presupposing the influence of Neo-Platonism; and Reitzenstein appears to have failed in his attempt to show cause to date any part of the literature in the first century. His grounds for assigning it this earlier date have been subjected by the Roman Catholic scholar, E. Krebs (*Der Logos als Heiland*, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1910) to a very searching and careful examination, and he has shown them to be highly precarious and improbable (*op. cit.*, pp. 133 ff.; cf. Ed. Meyer, *Ursprung*, ii pp. 371 ff.). This is the opinion of most of the scholars who have examined the matter. And the whole conception of a wide-spreading Hermetic sect or community appears to be groundless. On the other hand Krebs has again excellently laid bare the purely Jewish roots of the ideas of the Fourth Gospel. As I have already said, in examining the attempt to find a Hellenistic origin for the faith in Jesus as Lord, and for the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Body and Blood,[1] I do not think anything really lies at the *root* of the doctrine of the New Testament except the tradition of the Old Testament and the new experience which came to the disciples of Jesus in His teaching and person, His life and death and resurrection, and the mission of the Spirit. All the New Testament, including the Gospel of Paul and the Gospel of John, grew from the Jewish root and this experience of Jesus.

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[1] Richard Reitzenstein's *Poimandres* (Leipzig, 1904).

But when you come to the second stage, to the spread of the Catholic Church, I think the new criticism which calls our attention to Hellenistic syncretism, and sets the

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[1] See appended notes to cap. iii., pp. 395 ff.

Gnostic movement on its wider background, has much to teach us. With Christian *origins* Hellenism has very little to do. But the atmosphere of the mystery religions and of Hellenistic theosophy, with its yearning for divine fellowship and spiritual light and knowledge and salvation and a new birth, and its love of sacramental symbolism and fellowship, has a good deal to do with the *diffusion* of the Christian Church. It both provided its opportunity and constituted in part its peril; and we shall have to return upon the modern theory of the influence of the Hellenistic theosophy and the mystery religions, when we are dealing with the theory of the Church and the sacraments in Book III.

See further on the Hermetic Books, and on Reitzenstein's theory, *Can We then Believe*, n. 14, pp. 217 ff.

CHAPTER V

THE APOCALYPTIC TEACHING OF JESUS

It is undeniable that the apocalyptic expectation formed a large element in the faith of the first Church, and that it was, on the lowest estimate, a considerable feature in the teaching of Jesus. By the apocalyptic expectation we mean the expectation that Jesus, the Christ, who had been crucified and now was risen and exalted to heaven, was "to come in glory" to "restore all things" and "to judge the quick and the dead."[1] The Church has long been accustomed to call this "the second coming": and it is so referred to once or twice in the New Testament.[2] But almost always it is called simply "the coming" or "the presence" of Christ.[3] This is the word common to St. Matthew, St. James, St. Paul, and St. John. The birth, the ministry, the passion, the resurrection, the effusion of the Spirit—all these are indeed represented as moments or stages in His coming. But all these are viewed as incomplete. Then and then only will He in an adequate sense have come, when He comes into His own, or God comes into His own in Him, in fully manifested glory, so that "every eye shall see him," and every adverse power shall have been put under His feet. This is the old fundamental Jewish hope of the "day of the Lord." And this had, as we have seen, a very real and undeniable place in our Lord's own mind and teaching. No one therefore can think seriously about belief in Christ without fully facing this belief in the future coming of Christ in glory. But recently it has come to be widely and confidently stated and believed that Jesus Himself anticipated and proclaimed His *immediate* coming as the glorified Christ, within the lifetime of His own generation, and was in this (as in some other respects) deluded, or the victim of current ideas which were in fact illusions[1]; and there has been a great deal of discussion of the bearing of these delusions of the mind of Christ upon the theology of His person. But we had better, first of all, see whether there is sufficient reason to attribute delusions to Him; and we can only effectively do this if we have in view the Jewish expectation, Messianic and Apocalyptic, as it was before our Lord came, and take careful note of the way in which He both accepted it and also fundamentally altered its character. Then only can we estimate the justice with which delusion or mistake is attributed to Him as regards "the end" and the immediacy of the end.

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[1] Acts iii 21, x 42, xvii 31.

[2] Heb. ix 28; cf. i. 6.

[3] *παρουσία*. See Matt. xxiv 3, 27, 37, 39, James v 7–8, 1 Thess. ii 19, iii 13, iv 15, etc., 1 John ii 28.

The Jews, as we have already seen,[2] were conspicuous among the nations of the earth for their belief (i) in a divine purpose in the whole world, which was to be progressively realized and finally consummated, and (ii) in their own race as the divinely chosen instrument of this universal purpose, as it was said to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This is the root of the Messianic hope as the prophets of Israel announced it; and it takes shape in the following forms and features of the hope, which have been already discussed and will here only be alluded to:

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[1] This however is of course not a merely recent difficulty for faith. I remember Professor Henry Sidgwick, shortly before his death in 1900, telling me that it had been a main reason with him for renouncing orthodoxy forty years before.

Other cases of presumed *error* in the mind and teaching of Jesus Christ—as regards the existence and activity of Satan and devils, and as regards the literary character of the Old Testament books—are dealt with below (pp. 385 ff.).

[2] See above, pp. 309 ff.

1. That the religion of Israel is finally to win universal sovereignty and universal recognition. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and all nations shall flow unto it. . . . Out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."[1]

2. That Israel is the elect vehicle of this true religion, and that the anointed king of the family of David, who is to bear the divine name, and to fulfil the predestined glory of Israel, is to be the instrument of this divine supremacy, this Kingdom of God.[2]

3. That this Kingdom to come is to be accompanied with, or be based upon, a new, more spiritual, and everlasting covenant between God and His restored people,[3] and the nations of the world reconciled to Israel.

4. That also it is to be accompanied with an effusion of the Spirit of God, not only upon the anointed king, but upon the whole people—upon all flesh.[4]

5. That also it must involve a resurrection from the dead of faithful Israelites who have died, that they too may participate in the Kingdom; and this belief in the resurrection of faithful Israelites becomes a belief in a resurrection generally of all, good or evil alike, to glory or shame.[5]

6. This sovereignty of God requires for its establishment the infliction of the judgment of God upon

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[1] See above, pp. 311 f.

[2] See above, pp. 312–13.

[3] See above, p. 314.

[4] Is. xi init. and Joel ii 28–9. In Is. xlii and lxi the Spirit is poured upon "The Servant," who begins by being the faithful remnant of the people but seems to become an individual.

[5] Is. xxvi 4, Dan. xii 2.

every insolent and godless power in turn. The prophets are full of "oracles of Jehovah" upon Assyria, upon Egypt, upon Babylon, upon Edom, upon Tyre, upon "the nations" generally. The prophets announce like judgments upon apostate and rebellious Israel and Judah; but on the whole with a marked difference. The judgments upon the nations are final and irreversible.[1] The judgment on Israel is, on the other hand, always figured as a severe and just discipline, out of which at least a faithful remnant is to emerge to fulfil the destiny of the chosen people.

7. These particular judgments or dooms on particular nations are again and again thrown upon the background of tremendous cosmic catastrophes. Thus the doom on Babylon (Is. xiii 10–13) has this background: "The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. . . . I will make the heavens to tremble and the earth shall be shaken out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger." Or again the doom on Edom (Is. xxxiv 4–5) is thus accompanied: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled away as a scroll: and all their host shall fade away, as the leaf fadeth from off the vine, and as a fading leaf from off the fig-tree. For my sword hath drunk its fill in heaven: behold it shall come down upon Edom . . . to judgment." I have chosen these two quotations because our Lord so precisely repeats the language of these two passages in His doom upon Jerusalem.

What did Isaiah mean by such language? We know that the Jewish seers and poets often represent nature as expressing sympathy, even violently, with the redemptive acts of God. "Why hop ye so, ye high hills?" "The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord." "The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." This is a kind of metaphor which we find in poets of many nations. It is akin to what Ruskin called the "pathetic fallacy." It is interesting to learn that mediaeval Jews in Spain commemorated thus the death of a certain Rabbi Isaac Alfasi, on May 12, 1103: "This day was a calamity: it was a day of misfortune and oppression, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and mist, a day when the heavens and their luminaries were obscured, when they were clothed with sackcloth. The stars put on mourning; the hills bowed; all Israel was terrified." And another epitaph on Rabbi Jona from the next century runs: "Son of Sion, before this stone weep for the sun buried beneath the dust of the earth; the firmament was clothed with darkness, the constellations were ashamed: the moon blushed; on the day when the glory and crown of the Law was buried."[1] Here we have, no doubt, nothing but conscious metaphor. All that is really meant is that two Rabbis died deeply regretted, and that nature must have sympathized with the sorrow of the Jews.

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[1] Except in Jeremiah; see above, p. 312, n. 3.

But though such expressions as Isaiah uses may be conscious metaphors, they are not mere metaphors. They mean at least that in the prophet's vision the physical world served the moral purpose of God, and might at any moment be expected to express it. And in the latter days of prophecy, when the triumph of Israel over the nations seemed more and more impossible by natural means, apocalyptic seers more and more clearly anticipate cosmic catastrophe wrought by God in His omnipotence to end the present world order, and usher in "a new heaven and a new earth."

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[1] See Lagrange, *Le Messianisme chez les Juifs* (Paris, 1909), pp. 49–50.

So we get the idea of an "end of the world" followed by a "world to come," in the later literature. But in all the books of the Old Testament, and indeed in the New Testament, it appears to be always in some sense this world which emerges, renovated through cataclysm, as the sphere of the Kingdom of God.[1] Only in some of the later uncanonical Apocalypses, which seem in this respect to exhibit influences from Persia, this world seems to be wholly obliterated at the last day or wholly left behind, and an altogether "other" world takes its place. "The earth however purged and purified is no fitting scene for an eternal kingdom. . . . God's habitation and that of the blessed must be built not of things earthly and corruptible, but of things heavenly and incorruptible."[2] But enough has been said about this already. Where this is so, the Messianic Kingdom, in the old Jewish sense, becomes very difficult to adjust to this "other world." It is either ignored altogether or becomes a rather meaningless temporary prelude to the Last Day.

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[1] This will be obvious to anyone who will read Is. xxiv—seemingly a late prophecy incorporated in Isaiah where, after "the earth is utterly broken, the earth is clean dissolved," etc., it still appears that Mount Zion and Jerusalem stand as the centre of the divine kingdom. So it is again in Joel ii after the cataclysm of verses 30, 31 (see verse 32 and iii 1 and 16–21). So in Daniel vii 13 the sovereignty of the "one like unto a son of man who came with the clouds of heaven" and was given universal dominion by the "Ancient of Days"—which is interpreted immediately as the rule of the saints of the Most High, that is of faithful Israel—is still, like the previous sovereignties of the "great beasts," that is the godless powers which it supplants, a sovereignty on this earth (see verses 21–7).

And if the matter is frankly considered we must admit that the expectation of the New Testament is still that of a return of Christ to earth, a heavenly kingdom to come on earth—though it be a new heaven and a new earth—a new Jerusalem which is to come down from heaven as God's final dwelling-place among men (see, e.g., Acts iii 20–21 ; 1 Thess. iv 16 ; Rom. viii 20–22). In 2 Peter iii the day of judgment by fire is conceived of on the analogy of the earlier judgment by water : both judgments are represented as destroying an old world and bringing a new one into existence—which is still only the old one purged and renewed. So also in the Revelation.

[2] Charles, *Between the Old and New Testaments*, pp. 56–7.

The influence of these later Apocalypses has of recent years been much exaggerated. We have already had occasion to argue that all the literature of the New Testament tends to show that in our Lord's day the hope of the Messiah and His Kingdom was on the lines of the old prophetic hope of the King of David's line, who should restore the kingdom to Israel, whether this hope was more spiritually conceived, as it is represented in the opening chapters of St. Luke's Gospel, or was entertained on nationalist and militarist lines as by the mass of the people. When John the Baptist preached the Kingdom and the Christ as at hand, he sought to spiritualize the people's conception of what was coming, as being something so holy and awful as that only a new Israel, changed and purified in heart, could meet it; but this was only to renew the warnings of the old prophets. There is nothing in John the Baptist's teaching to suggest the later Apocalypses.[1]

What we have now to discover is the sense in which Christ both accepted and also transformed the old Messianic teaching.

To go back, then, to the headings under which we summarized the Jewish hope, and to deal very briefly with the earlier ones, (1) it must be granted that our Lord, while accepting the limitation of His own mission on earth to His own people, proclaimed a Gospel of the Kingdom which, having its roots in the Jewish religion (for "salvation is of the Jews"[2]), is now to become world-wide.

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[1] Matt. iii 10–12 suggests no more than Mal. iii 2, 3, iv 1.

[2] John iv. 22. But the idea underlies all the Gospels.

The sayings "The gospel must first be preached unto all nations," "Wherever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world,"[1] the authenticity of which cannot reasonably be doubted, are enough to show this. And at the beginning of His mission, in the account of the Temptations, it is evident that the last temptation[2] would have no meaning except as addressed to one who in some sense was contemplating world-wide dominion.

(2) It does not seem to have been disputed that our Lord could rightly claim to be of the family of David, as being the reputed son of Joseph, and He certainly acknowledged Himself to be the Christ; but it is plain that, in taking the title of "the Son of Man" and identifying it with the Suffering Servant of Jehovah, and criticizing for its inadequacy the current notion of the Christ as the son of David, He was turning His back in the most marked way on the Messianic hope, both as it was held in nationalist circles and as held among the Pharisees. He accepted, but He transformed in meaning, the Messiah's kingdom, so as to make it, in the most disconcerting sense, a kingdom not of this world.

(3) He solemnly, at the Last Supper at least, proclaimed the New Covenant as established in His blood.[3]

(4) As He declared Himself anointed and possessed by the Spirit,[4] so He led his disciples to expect His effusion upon them, at some definite moment after His departure, and the coming of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was at once identified as in some sense the coming of the Day of the Lord.[5]

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[1] Mark xiii 10, xiv 9. [2] Matt. iv 8. [3] See above, p. 397.

[4] See Luke iv 1, 18, 21. There is very little teaching about the Holy Spirit ascribed to our Lord in the Synoptists. But St. Luke is explicit in xxiv 49 and Acts i 5, 8. And it is, I think, impossible to doubt, in view of the belief of the first disciples, that teaching like that of John xiv to xvi must have been given by Him.

[5] Acts ii 17–18.

(5) Our Lord is represented in all the Gospels as constantly foretelling not His death only but also His resurrection: and the resurrection of the dead was, as we have seen, to be one of the signs that the Kingdom was come.[1]

Here then let us pause a moment. If it be agreed, as I think it should be, that our Lord, while He accepted the Messianic expectation, profoundly spiritualized it, declaring the "Kingdom of God" to be a kingdom of righteous men, such as must have its roots in the wills and hearts of men, and needs to be spiritually discerned, and is in actual process of establishment[2]; and if further He took three recognized notes of the Kingdom, the New Covenant of God with His people, and the Resurrection of the Dead, and the effusion of the Spirit, and led His disciples to expect the realization of these notes in the immediate future—that is in His own death and the immediately following events—if this be so, then there was certainly a sense in which He viewed the Kingdom as coming immediately. Thus when we find Him saying "Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God come with power,"[3] and again, before His Jewish judges, "Henceforth (not 'hereafter' as in our old Bible, but 'henceforth') ye shall see the

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[1] St. Paul, in Rom. i 4, speaks of Christ's resurrection as "the resurrection of dead men"—i.e. it was the firstfruits and assurance of the general resurrection. There are several indications in the N.T. of this point of view.

[2] See Mark vii 15 ff., Luke xvii 21, John iii 3.

[3] Mark ix 1, Luke ix 27, where the words "come with power" are omitted. In Matt. xvi 28 it stands "till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." There was a tendency in St. Matthew to put all these prophecies in the form most suggestive of a visible coming of the glorified Christ. But where the reports differ in detail, one thing is quite certain—we cannot be sure of the *very words* of Christ on the particular occasion.

Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven "[1] (as in the vision of Daniel), we shall be disposed to find a fulfilment of these prophecies in the early chapters of the Acts. There we are given a picture of the little community of disciples absorbed in the sense of their Lord as already exalted by God's right hand and to God's right hand, and as acting upon them and through them with power from heaven, though there was a further coming to be expected. And so impressed were "the brethren" with the divine power working through the apostles that they regarded them, even in their own community, as a class apart. "Of the rest durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the (Jewish) people magnified them."[2] The disciples would have felt that they already saw the Twelve, according to Christ's promise, "sitting on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[3]

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[1] Here Mark gives only "Ye shall see" (xiv 62). But both Matt. xxvi 64 and Luke xxii 69 give us the "henceforth " (ἀπ' ἄρτι or ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν). In St. Luke the words are "From henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God." But whatever the exact words, our Lord is recalling the vision in Daniel vii of one "like unto a Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven."

I do not think there is any need to suppose our Lord in these places to be citing the Book of Enoch. Daniel vii 13 satisfies all the requirements of the quotations. There is an excellent paper of the late Dr. Moorhouse, Bishop of Manchester, entitled *Did Our Lord Jesus Christ share the Popular Opinions of the Jews on Eschatology?* (which he circulated but, as far as I know, did not publish), in which he answers his question in the negative, or in the sense that He "transmuted" the popular Apocalyptic. He says, and, I think, in the main, truly: "There is good reason to believe that our Lord invariably took his apocalyptic imagery, not from the later apocryphal writings, but from the books of the canonical prophecies." But I have argued above that our Lord's language assumes that the figure in Daniel had been already recognized as an individual person such as can be identified with the Messiah, and this identification probably came from Enoch.

[2] Acts v 12. See Rackham *in loc.*

[3] See Luke xxii 30.

Already the community of believers in Jesus as the Christ was the real Israel, and the Apostles were its princes, and Christ was not only reigning in glory in heaven but was so manifested on earth in judgments and wonderful works.

(6) But we have still to consider the two last elements (6 and 7) of the Messianic expectation, and first that of judgment on the hostile, godless powers. Our Lord, then, certainly, like the old prophets, pronounces a doom on a hostile power, but in this case the hostile power is the chosen people itself, who in their rejection of the Christ have shown themselves the enemies of God.

This is plainly the meaning of the parable of the vineyard[1] which appears in all three Synoptic Gospels. The sin of Israel has been consummated in the rejection of the Son of God, and God will come in judgment to destroy these unfaithful agents (I suppose the Jewish rulers in particular), and give His spiritual possession in charge to others—doubtless the "little flock" to whom Jesus said "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."[2] The same doom is recorded to have been pronounced with passionate anguish at the end of the woes upon the scribes and Pharisees in St. Matthew. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . Behold your house is left unto you desolate,"[3] and, in St. Luke, with bitter tears when Jesus beheld the city and wept over it.[4] St. Paul, we notice, entertained no doubt that the doom on Jerusalem was irreversible—"wrath is come upon them to the uttermost."[5]

But, of course, the most detailed judgment on Jerusalem is in what is called our Lord's apocalyptic discourse given in St. Mark xiii,[1] and the parallel passage in the other Gospels. There we read how our Lord had His attention called by one of His disciples to the magnificence of the temple buildings, and makes it the opportunity for denouncing upon them speedy and complete ruin. Then when the inner circle of disciples asks Him when this is to happen and what sign is to presage the disaster,[2] our Lord describes a time of spiritual confusion, political unrest, and physical calamity, which is to be expected before the judgment falls.[3] And He warns the apostles that they are to find not only the Jewish rulers but the world powers arrayed against them in their task of preaching the Gospel unto all the nations, and that they are to be objects of universal hatred, and to be subjected to the severest strain. Then, when they see an awful profanation of the Holy Place occurring, such as is obscurely described in the Book of Daniel, the disciples who are in Judaea are to escape from the doomed city at once, without a moment's delay, and flee to the mountains. A scene of unparalleled horror is to be expected from which they shall barely escape, and the physical horrors shall be made more trying by the seductions of false Christs and false prophets (verses 5-23). There are to follow "in those days, after that tribulation," portents in the heavens described in the words of Isaiah—darkened sun and moon, falling stars, shaken heavens, and also —what has no counterpart in Isaiah—the coming of the Son of Man in power and glory, accompanied with angels whom He will send to gather together His scattered people from all quarters of the world (verses 24–7). Then we are taken back to the time of preparation, and the disciples are warned of the certainty of the doom, and that this generation shall see it accomplished (verses 30–31). Then, in what appears to be sudden contrast, we hear of a certain day and hour ("that day" and "that hour") which is veiled in complete uncertainty, of which even the Son has no knowledge; and the discourse as it stands ends with a warning to them, couched in a parable, that, though their Lord after His departure should seem to delay His return, they are always to watch, for it will be sudden, when it comes, and they know not when to expect it (32–7).

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[1] Mark xii 9.

[2] Luke xii 32.

[3] Matt. xxiii 37–8. It is possible that verse 39 was pronounced before the entry into Jerusalem.

[4] Luke xix 41 ff.

[5] 1 Thess. ii 15–16.

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[1] The critics have largely accepted the view that a considerable part of the discourse (verses 7–8, 12, 14, 17–22, 24–7, 30) was not pronounced by our Lord but was a "little apocalypse" due to some prophet near the time of the destruction of Jerusalem—about A.D. 66—and is the "oracle" which Eusebius (*H.E.* iii 5, apparently on the authority of Hegesippus) declares to have warned the Christians of Jerusalem to escape and remove to Pella, a city of Peraea. I do not see sufficient reasons for adopting this view. The "oracle" referred to by Eusebius may have been simply a warning that *now* was the moment to act on the Lord's admonition given to a few disciples privately nearly forty years before, and carefully treasured in writing by the Jerusalem Church as its secret. This would account for St. Mark here using a written document, as he seems to do (see verse 14)

[2] In Matthew the question is made to concern *both* the destruction and (as a separate event) the end of the world. St. Matthew tends generally to heighten the apocalyptic colouring of our Lord's discourses. We cannot doubt that St. Mark rightly records their question.

[3] Appended note, p. 456.

The main purpose of this discourse—apart from its warnings of the spiritual trials which our Lord's apostles are to expect—is to declare explicitly and with imaginative[1] detail, such as we are familiar with in the "judgments" of the old prophets, the certain doom upon Jerusalem to be accomplished before "this generation had passed away." This was a definite prophecy, and it was fulfilled in A.D. 70, amidst unimaginable horrors.

(7) But this doom upon Jerusalem is thrown, after the manner of the ancient prophets, and in the

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[1] The details appear to be details of the picture, as presented to their imagination, rather than detailed prophecy of circumstances. Thus the Christians of Jerusalem did not "flee to the mountains," but over the Jordan and just across it to Pella, opposite southern Galilee.

words of Isaiah, upon a background of cosmic portents—darkened sun and moon, falling stars, shaken heavens, heralding the coming of the Son of Man as described in the vision of Daniel, but now as coming to earth to fulfil what had always been associated in prophecy with the Messianic kingdom—that is, the gathering of the true Israelites from all the quarters of the globe.[1] And there are other passages in which our Lord is recorded to have spoken of the coming of the Christ in glory to wind up the present world history in scathing judgment and abundant blessing, in phrases which are based upon Daniel's vision but assume that the figure of " one like to a son of man " has been already identified with the Christ,[2] and the final Day of Judgment a familiar prospect. The distinctive scenery of the day of judgment is more prominent in St. Matthew's accounts of our Lord's discourses than in those of the other Evangelists. But it is not, I think, possible to doubt that our Lord did not merely describe the destruction of Jerusalem in terms of celestial portents, after the manner of Isaiah, but did throw this judgment upon the background of the great and universal Day of Judgment with the glorified Christ for judge, thus adopting the latter apocalyptic imagery.

In what sense, we ask ? Well, it seems to me that any believer in the God of the prophets and of our Lord must believe with them in a Day of God, as bringing the present age, or human history, to its climax. God, for all His long tolerance of human wilfulness and arrogance, must one day come into His own in His whole creation, and everything must be seen in its true light as what it is really worth. That is the "day of judgment" in its essence. And no believer in Christ can doubt that this final disclosure of things as they really are will be the manifested victory of Christ. His judgment on men and things will be shown to be the final judgment and the judgment of God. And this Day, like all the preparatory and partial "days of judgment," will speak the divine doom on all corrupt civilizations and godless and inhuman forms of power and institutions of cruelty and lust, and on all rebels against God and right, only now not partially and locally, but universally, in the whole created world. We cannot, it seems to me, hold any conception of progress which is consistent with the facts of experience, without recognizing that the divine purpose of progress works through cataclysms as well as gradually, and that the final coming of the Kingdom (if such an expectation is entertained) must involve a cataclysm also on the vastest scale. It seems to me quite certain that our Lord enforces this doctrine, and that He clothed this moral certainty in the tremendous imagery of the rending clouds, and the descending form, and the throne and the angels, and the judgment spoken on every soul. Certainly our Lord was ready enough to use imagery, and knew well enough how to distinguish symbolism from literal language. I cannot doubt that His picture of the Last Day is the clothing of an awful reality in symbolic forms. Only let us agree that our Lord, in this solemn imagery, did affirm that human history would reach its climax in what would be at once the coming of the Kingdom in full glory and the final Day of Judgment, and threw upon this background the immediate judgment on Jerusalem.

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[1] Deut. xxx 3, Jer. xxiii 3, xxxii 37, Ezek. xxxiv 13, etc.

[2] Such passages are Matt. xiii 40–41, the conclusion of the parable of the Tares, Matt. xvi 27, Mark viii 38, Luke ix 26, Matt. xxv 31 ff., Luke xii 40 and 46, xix 15, John v 28. The first Church was plainly full of this expectation.

But now we come back to the question mentioned at starting this enquiry—did our Lord declare that the Last Day would follow immediately on the Fall of Jerusalem, and did He in this respect show Himself to be under the influence of a current apocalyptic expectation, and in fact mistaken ?

There was certainly, I think, mistake somewhere. St. Matthew with his " immediately " (xxiv 29) must be interpreted as meaning that the great day would follow the destruction of Jerusalem as a separate event without any considerable interval. And, in the sense intended, this certainly did not occur. But St. Mark's words are vaguer, "in those days, after that tribulation " (xiii 24), and St. Luke suggests an interval of indefinite length : " Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled " (xxi 24). Plainly we cannot rely upon having the precise words of Christ, and we seem to detect contrary tendencies in St. Matthew and St. Luke—in St. Matthew to accentuate everything apocalyptic in our Lord's words, and in St. Luke to minimize. If we are to form a sound judgment we must look at the general tenour of our Lord's teaching as a whole, and not lay stress upon single phrases in one Gospel.

I would say then that the extreme apocalyptic estimate of Christ formed (for example) by Schweitzer must certainly be rejected. He represents the Christ of current Judaism as simply the Heavenly Figure of Daniel and Enoch. He would have us believe that there was no question of our Lord while on earth being the Christ already. It was simply that He believed Himself, and was believed by others, to be destined to be the Christ from heaven. But that estimate alike of current Jewish belief and of the special belief concerning Jesus is, as has already been shown, quite contrary to the evidence. Holding this mistaken or very one-sided idea of the Messianic expectation, Schweitzer maintains that our Lord, when He first sent out the Twelve, expected to come as Christ in the clouds of heaven (without dying) before their brief mission was ended,[1] and that He had no idea of promoting any Kingdom of God in the world or establishing (what is the same thing) any new way or order of life among men. All His rapt attention was on the Last Day and the other world, as to come within the next few weeks. When He was disappointed about this, His disappointment, and the warning of the execution of John the Baptist, taught Him to think that He should offer Himself for death and that His sacrificial death would certainly move God to bring the kingdom from heaven at once.

All this picture of our Lord is surely violently one-sided and distorted. Our Lord assuredly proclaimed a kingdom of God, characterized by a new vision of God and a new conception of righteousness, which in one sense was already in being—a kingdom of God established in the hearts of men—already within men or among them.[2] Again, He certainly spoke of the growth of the kingdom under the figure of the growth of a plant and the diffusion of leaven; and again, as a mixed society on earth, which only at the final day could be completely purified.[1] He certainly prepared His "little flock" to become the New Israel, and therefore (in some sense) the kingdom of God on earth.[2] Again, He certainly spoke of a preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom throughout the whole world,[3] and He must have known, He who was supremely sane, that this must be an affair of a long time. Moreover, He speaks again and again of the strain upon courage and faith involved in waiting while God seems to do nothing—this under the figure of the man of property who left the administration of his property to others and went away "for a long time," and in other similar parables[4]; and He asked the startling question: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth?"[5]—or will the strain have been too much for it? It is plain that St. Luke is aware of a tendency to misrepresent our Lord (as he thinks) as having prophesied an *immediate* end, and desires to correct it.[6]

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[1] This is founded on Matt. x 23: "But when they persecute you in the city, flee unto the next: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." But the whole of this section in St. Matthew, verses 16–23, appears to be antedated. It belongs properly to the preparation by Christ of the apostles for their experiences after He was gone from them. (See Mark xiii 9–13, and Luke xxi 12–19.) The particular words quoted, which do not appear in St. Mark or St. Luke, probably in their original context meant "Never stay anywhere to press the Gospel on those who do not want it. There will always be unevangelized places to be given their chance before the Gospel is preached in the whole world and the end comes." I think we must conclude that St. Matthew, in adapting the words to a much earlier situation—a preliminary mission of the Twelve exclusively to Jews—has given them a misleading appearance. At any rate, whatever the words may be held to mean, it is an unreasonable thing to accentuate a solitary and unsupported saying so as to give to Jesus an appearance of being such a fanatic as is quite out of character with the general tone of His teaching.

[2] Luke xvii 20; cf. Matt. xi 12, xiii 44–6.

Also we cannot ignore the teaching of the Fourth Gospel. The final coming is there, and in the First Epistle of St. John, still the object of expectation.[7] But the writer also plainly thinks it his business to remind the Church that the apocalyptic expectation was not the *whole* of our Lord's teaching, nor (in his eyes) its most important element. Christ also prepared for the establishment of His kingdom here and now in the world, by the sending of His Spirit, which was also His own return by the Spirit.

Thus, on the whole, we seem to me to have every reason to believe that our Lord's teaching about the coming of the kingdom was much more complex and many-sided than the apocalyptic school acknowledges. He accepted, but He transmuted, the apocalyptic hope. He prophesied an immediate coming by the Spirit. He prophesied a speedy coming in judgment on Jerusalem. He also threw this "doom" upon the background of a final coming or Day of Judgment. No doubt the first disciples expected this final day immediately, and the expectation has coloured the report of our Lord's words in St. Matthew and perhaps somewhat in St. Mark also. But it is in both these Gospels that we read the indisputably authentic words of Christ: "Of that day and that hour knoweth no one, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." This certainly means that our Lord had not—at least in His mortal state—a map of the future spread before Him. We should take these words in connection with those recorded of our Lord by St. Luke, before His ascension, in answer to a question of the disciples, which shows them still clinging to the old Jewish hope in its fallacious form: "Dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"—"He said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father hath set within his own authority."[1] These last two sayings mean, I think, unmistakably that our Lord gave no teaching at all upon the time of the end. He left it wholly vague and indefinite.

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[1] Mark iv 30, Matt. xiii 33, 47–50, 52.

[2] That is to say, He refounded the Church. But this is reserved for argument in the next volume.

[3] Mark xiii 10, xiv 9.

[4] Matt. xxv 19; cf. Luke xix 12, "into a far country."

[5] Luke xviii 8.

[6] Luke xix 11. "Because they supposed that the Kingdom of God was immediately to appear."

[7] John v 28–9, vi 39, 40, 54 ("the last day"), xi 24, xii 48, xxi 22–3; 1 John ii 28, iii 2, 2 John 7.

Thus, we must, on reviewing the whole evidence, give a negative answer to the question whether our Lord was mistaken about the time of the end. I think we have seen cogent reasons for saying that our Lord refused to give any teaching on the subject, and declared it not to be within the scope of His knowledge, as He then was. There was mistake—

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[1] Acts i 6, 7.

but it was on the part of the disciples, and not of our Lord; and we have, I think, to admit that it has somewhat discoloured some expressions, especially in the first of the Synoptic Gospels, but not sufficiently to prevent our correcting the discolouring out of the total impression left us.

I think, also, that this answer to the question is the one suggested by the attitude of the disciples, especially St. Paul, in the matter. Plainly he at first shared the expectation of the end within his own lifetime,[1] and plainly also he grew out of it [2]—not out of the expectation, but out of its immediacy—simply by the growth of his experience and reflection, and without any shock. It would appear as if the expectation was to him *not* an "article of faith" and *not* something for which he had a word of Christ. Otherwise there would have been the sense of shock. And St. Paul's attitude is reflected in that of the whole Church. Jerusalem fell—by wholly natural means, but according to the prophecy of Jesus: yet "the end" did not come. Then we find the seer of the Apocalypse making another prophecy. The hostile power is now not the apostate Israel but the Roman Empire turned persecutor; and the seer pronounces upon it the doom of God, and again throws that doom upon the background of the End. The Church, we gather, like St. Paul, had experienced no shock in seeing that the Day of God did not "immediately" follow, as they had expected, the doom on Jerusalem. They prepared to see another doom on another hostile power, persecuting Rome, and again to throw it upon the background of the final and universal judgment.

This represents the attitude which our Lord would have His disciples take. Because they believe in God, they must take it for granted that in no

[1] 1 Thess. iv 14, 1 Cor. xv 51.

[2] Phil. i 23, 2 Tim. iv 6.

department can evil be finally victorious. The end is certain and is to be eagerly expected. God must come into His own. That is "the day of the Lord," or "day of judgment." In the world's history there are many days of judgment. Over long periods indeed God seems to do nothing and the world-power to have it all its own way. But there are also days when the world-power seems to be cracking and dissolving, and then it falls. God has bared His arm. Sooner or later the judgment of God falls "naturally" on every institution which ignores, persistently and defiantly, the law of righteousness. "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Thus we have many "last days,"[1] or "days of extremity," followed by "days of the Lord." But all these days of the Lord, of which the Bible record is full, are the prelude of something final and universal—*the* Day—after which God is to be all in all. Of the date of this we know, and are to know, nothing, and of its character and manner of coming we hear only in apocalyptic imagery and symbolism, as a reflection in a mirror, or in a riddle. Only we know it is certain to come, and as we belong already to the kingdom of God we most passionately and eagerly desire to see it fully consummated.

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It is from such a point of view as this that, though it is going somewhat out of our way, we can attempt a brief answer to the question which is continually being raised afresh, whether Christianity is a religion of this world or an other-worldly religion—whether Christians are to labour for the gradual upbuilding of the city of God on earth by the transformation both of individual characters and human institutions, or whether they are to look forward to the destruction of this wicked world and all that belongs to it, and the perfecting of man's hopes in a quite different world called heaven?

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[1] I think Westcott (on 1 John ii 18), and Hort (on 1 Peter i 5), and Parry (on 2 Tim. iii 1) are right in distinguishing "*the* last day" from "last days" and "a last hour." "There is clearly a distinction to be drawn, according as the article is used or not."

The problem is generally stated in somewhat misleading terms—as an alternative—but there can be no question that for a very long period of time popular religion has contented itself in the main with the latter expectation: and that the apathy of religious people in the face of social injustice —all that has given point to the charge that "religion has been the opium of the poor"—has been due in great measure to the hold that this idea has had on the religious imagination. But I think that any frank consideration of the New Testament will lead us to the conclusion that the New Testament, as well as the Old, is on the other side.[1] There the aim is that the kingdom of God should come "on earth as it is in heaven."[2] The end is always pictured as the Return of Christ in glory and triumph from heaven to earth with the angels and saints—all the treasures of heaven to be fused with a purged and renewed earth: it is the redemption of "the whole creation": it is the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven to be God's dwelling-place upon the "new earth" and under the "new heaven": it is "the kingdom of the world" made "the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ." We will not concern ourselves with the question of the meaning to be attached to the preliminary millennium of the Apocalypse. But there can be no question, I think, that the ultimate kingdom is in the New Testament, on the whole, figured not only as including this world, purged by scathing judgment, but in some sense as centring upon it. Let us allow as fully as possible that all the language about the last things is highly figurative: nevertheless it is intended to impress and affect our imagination, and it makes the greatest possible difference if our imagination becomes rightly coloured—if what we come to anticipate with assurance is not our being carried away to some other remote world, but the victory of God in the creation and world that we know.

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[1] See above, p. 437 n. 1, with references. I find in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, art. "Heaven": "In the N.T. the heaven which is to be our final home and the goal of our hope is a heaven that is above this world and beyond time, not only superterrestrial, but supramundane, the transcendent heaven which is brought to light in the Gospel" (p. 323). This seems to me a quite remarkably perverted statement.

[2] It would be an immense gain if Christians in general could be brought to realize that in the Lord's Prayer the words "in earth as it is in heaven" refer to all three previous clauses, and if the Lord's Prayer were printed and recited so as to make this evident.

And not only is this the truth about the end of the world, but it is also true that the Church—which is the old Israel renewed and refounded by Christ—is, or is the representative of, the kingdom of God on earth here and now, albeit not yet perfected,[1] the kingdom which is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." So the ethics of the New Testament are predominantly *social* ethics—the ethics of brotherhood; its discipline is primarily moral discipline. The aim of the Church is to show here and now the true human fellowship realized in Christ. It is bound to make war, in the name of Christ, on all injustice as much as on all impurity. It must take all human life for its province. It must develop its philosophy, its art, its principles of social economy. It exists in the world, but not of the world, and that means that it must vigorously and combatively maintain the true principles of human brotherhood and human life against "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"—that is, against the social aims and practices of the selfish, avaricious, and lustful world. This seems to me indisputable. The only question which remains to answer is whether the idea of a gradually and progressively realized kingdom of God in this world —a Church gradually appropriating the world, and consequently a world progressing towards perfection —is to oust the apocalyptic idea of a Christ manifested in cataclysm and judgment at the end—whether the two conceptions are mutually exclusive. Many of our Christian socialists appear to think so, and among the radical reconstructors of the Gospel men as unlike one another as Harnack and Schweitzer take it for granted that the apocalyptic hope is gone beyond recall and for good.

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[1] "Non adhuc regnat hoc regnum," St. Augustine says.

But I think we must not accept as mutually exclusive alternatives the idea of a progressive realization of the kingdom here and now and the apocalyptic hope. Both seem to me to find their place in the teaching and mind of Christ; and both seem to me to be equally warranted by experience, and needed for the equipment of human souls all down the generations. We are to labour for the establishment of the kingdom of God in the name of Christ and in the power of His Spirit here and now. But neither Christ nor experience warrants us in believing that we are to see the extinction of the power of evil within the present world order. Progress, as we recognize to-day, is an exceedingly fitful and chequered process. There is no security against the collapse of civilizations and Churches. The powers of evil do not seem to be worn out or to be weakened—only to take new shapes. Now, as of old, there appears to be the most fearful waste of the best human efforts. It seems to me that Jesus Christ would prepare us for all this by the apocalyptic, other-worldly hope. He would have us believe that no good effort for the cause of truth and righteousness will ever really be lost. Their "works follow with" the suffering servants who seem to die defeated, but "in the Lord." With them (or in them) the fruits of what they have thought and done and suffered are gathered into the treasury of God in the heavenly world unseen, and one day we shall see them with our eyes. We shall see the fruit of all true human effort integrated in the perfect fellowship, when Christ comes again—when the City of God descends. But we are not led to expect the City of God as the culmination of a gradually progressive movement to perfection. The present world order will always present the aspect of a more or less desperate struggle. It is on the other side of Armageddon that the City of God will appear. And that final battle will be won, as it seems, by the pure act of God, and the New Jerusalem will appear from heaven, so that we cannot imagine that we have fashioned it.

This is metaphorical teaching or symbolism, no doubt: but only in metaphor or symbol can we envisage the truth about the future. And the apocalyptic metaphors, which possess the hearts of men in days of seeming moral disaster, correspond, we may be persuaded, with spiritual realities which we shall one day experience.

NOTE TO P. 443

An Illustration from Tacitus

It is instructive to read, in connection with Mark xiii 7–13, Tacitus' introduction to his *Histories*, in which he is to describe the events of A.D. 68–70, and amongst them the Jewish War and the capture of Jerusalem, from the point of view of the Roman Empire: "The story I now commence is rich in vicissitudes, grim with warfare, torn by civil strife, a tale of horror even during times of peace. It tells of four emperors slain by the sword, three several civil wars, an even larger number of foreign wars, and some that were both at once. . . . Now, too, Italy was smitten with new disasters, or disasters which it had not witnessed for a long period of years. Towns along the rich coast of Campania were submerged or buried. The city was devastated by fires, ancient temples were destroyed, and the Capitol itself was fired by Roman hands. Sacred rites were profaned, and there were adulteries in high places. The sea swarmed with exiles, and the cliffs were red with blood. Worse horrors reigned in the city. . . . Slaves were bribed against their masters, freedmen against their patrons, and if a man had no enemies he was ruined by his friends. . . ." Then, after describing some better features of the life of the time, he continues: " Besides these manifold disasters to mankind there were portents in the sky and on the earth, and the warnings of thunderbolts, a premonition of good and of evil, some doubtful, some obvious. Indeed, never has it been proved by such terrible disasters to Rome or such clear evidence that the Gods were concerned not with our safety but with vengeance on our sins."

CHAPTER VI

IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION TRUE?

Thus far we have been pursuing a purely historical method. Thus, after duly taking into account the distinctively Jewish background of beliefs and expectations in which the faith in Jesus had its origin (cap. i, p. 297), we occupied ourselves in tracing the growth of the idea of His person as it appears in the New Testament. We began from the first undefined belief of the Twelve, which the scandal of the Cross temporarily overthrew (cap. ii, p. 330) but which revived under the experience of the Resurrection and the coming of the Spirit and took shape in the enthusiastic conviction of the original Church in Jerusalem that Jesus was truly the glorified Christ, the Lord of all, the object of worship, appointed to be the final judge of quick and dead.

This passionate faith, which might have seemed to be moving in the direction of the deification of the man Jesus, was interpreted to the Church itself by Saul of Tarsus—the scourge of the Church who was converted to become its glory—in the light of the title which in momentous utterances Jesus had used to describe Himself—the title of the Son of God. Not the deification of a man, but the Incarnation of the pre-existing Son, St. Paul declared to be the interpretation of His person. And though no teacher of the Church before St. Paul can be shown to have given it expression, yet it appears that the whole apostolic group and all the young churches welcomed the interpretation as the truth, quite without controversy. They must have felt that St. Paul was only giving clear utterance to what the language of Jesus implied about Himself, and what alone could explain or justify the unreserved faith they reposed in Him. The same doctrine of Christ's person is expressed from a rather different point of view by the Alexandrian author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (cap. iii, p. 366).

We saw that the Fourth Gospel gives this doctrine of incarnation its fullest and most deliberate expression, and makes the most decided claim to find in the language of Jesus Himself its indisputable justification ; and it was pointed out how strong the grounds are for believing that the Fourth Gospel presents us with a real historical tradition supplementary to the earlier Gospels. Finally we examined the language of the seer of the Apocalypse, and of James, and of Jude, and of Peter, and, though they do not plainly state any theory of Christ's person, we found it almost impossible to believe that they could have been satisfied with anything short of the Incarnation doctrine, in view of the indications of their faith which they give us.

There is, we saw, no rival adoptionist theory—no doctrine that is of a man adopted into the Godhead (apotheosis)—to be found in the New Testament, whether previously to St. Paul's activity or after his appearance on the scene. What had happened was that the years immediately succeeding the death and resurrection of Jesus saw the Church concentrated upon the worship of the glorified Christ and Lord, and treating Him as having "the values of God" for them, without apparently finding it necessary to form or proclaim any theory of His person. When St. Paul was given to the Church to do this service for them, they appear to have accepted his interpretation unanimously. It must have been already at work, we feel, under the surface in the apostolic company, though it does not find expression in the Acts. Later, in Jewish Ebionism and in Paul of Samosata's Adoptionism, we are given positive theories—rivals of the Incarnation doctrine—as that Jesus was an inspired man and no more, or a man assumed into the Godhead on account of his excellence—but these were certainly deteriorations from the level of the whole New Testament, even from the unformulated belief of the first Jerusalem Church. Indeed it is impossible to read the Epistle to the Hebrews without feeling that the writer's mind is full of the fear that any clinging to antiquated Jewish rites and ceremonies, on the part of those who have once confessed Jesus, will involve a lapse, not only morally but intellectually, from their first faith. And this is what actually occurred, if not to the group overseas to whom the Epistle to the Hebrews was apparently addressed, yet certainly in Palestine and nearer home (cap. iv, p. 402).

After this we devoted special attention to the apocalyptic element in the New Testament—the expectation of the future coming of the Christ in glory—and endeavoured to see it in its relation to the whole Messianic idea; and we saw that there are no adequate grounds for the often repeated assertion that Jesus Himself entertained the delusion of the immediate coming of the end of the world (cap. v, p. 432).

We shall have to pursue the course of the faith to its formulation in the creeds of the Church and the decisions of the Councils. But we had better pause here. The theologians of the later Church are unanimous in declaring that they were not originating anything, but defending and defining the faith of the New Testament—the faith of the apostles. This, no doubt, may be disputed and must be examined. But I think we shall find that they were justified in their contention in the sense that where we pass off the ground of the New Testament we leave behind us, already accomplished, the fundamentally creative work in Christian theology.

But, whether this be wholly true or no, there is at any rate enough truth in it to justify us in pausing at this point to ask whether the doctrine of the incarnation of the Son of God, as we find it in St. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews and St. John, is really the only legitimate way of thinking of and accounting for the historical person—Jesus of Nazareth.

I

At the beginning of our inquiry[1] I described certain rival interpretations of His person which at present are largely in occupation of the intellectual field, and which are associated especially with the names of Harnack, Schweitzer, and Bousset. It is common to the maintainers of all these rival interpretations that they approach the Gospels with what I think we must call a dogmatic prejudice. On general philosophical and historical grounds they peremptorily refuse to admit the credibility of miracles, so far as these go beyond healings of the sick effected by suggestion, and apparently quite as peremptorily they refuse to entertain, as even an hypothesis to be fairly considered, the traditional conception of Jesus as the incarnation of a divine person. At all costs the Christ of history must for them be found non-miraculous and (however much inspired by the Spirit of God) purely a human person.

I have laboured (in the book preceding this) to convince my readers that these presuppositions are unwarranted—that we can approach the Gospels open-minded. I also insisted that any treatment of the Gospels which refuses the strictly miraculous is forced to eliminate so much out of the foundation documents as to discredit them deeply as historical records. The narrative has to be rewritten from the point of view of each new critic, accentuating this and leaving out that, as his particular judgment dictates. The proof that this is so lies in the extraordinary differences between the various critical reconstructions of the historical Jesus, notably between the three to which I specially called attention. My answer, therefore, to those "critical" estimates I have attempted to give in this way—I have urged the high claim of our foundation Gospel documents and the Acts of the Apostles to take rank as credible history. I have begged my readers to approach the study of these documents with an open mind. Taking them, not as exempt from error, but as good history, and seeking to give an impartial attention to all the elements of the narrative, I have sought to trace the growth of the belief in Christ's person as it is represented in these narratives and as it reaches its coherent expression in the Epistles. The picture of the development of a belief which such impartial study discloses is to my mind very convincing. The facts as they are recorded account for the developing belief, and the belief interprets the facts. It alone can interpret the facts as a whole. In proof of this I must go back to Harnack and Schweitzer.

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[1] See above, pp. 331 ff.

Harnack admirably describes the ethical teaching of Christ, but there are three elements in our fundamental records which he perforce refuses to admit as historical, not on critical but on *a priori* grounds: the claim of a divine Sonship which, as it stands (both in St. Mark and Q), Harnack admits to be superhuman; the tremendous apocalyptic claim, which he minimizes towards vanishing-point; and the miracles, especially the real Resurrection. That is to say that out of four elements in our foundation Gospels, which are all equally and obtrusively present, Harnack chooses one and fashions his picture out of it alone, with the result that the Jesus of history, as he represents Him, seems altogether inadequate to account for the results which have flowed forth from Him. Jesus, the ethical and spiritual prophet, was a fact of history, but it appears that there was much there besides.

I would advise anyone to read Harnack's account of the faith in Jesus of the apostolic band immediately after His death[1] and, without stopping to criticize it in detail, ask himself whether it does not require the actual fact of the Resurrection, and what followed, to account for it. The picture in the Gospels and Acts is lifelike and unmistakable. A hesitating, vacillating company who deserted their Master in the hour of His seeming failure and death are, after a brief interval, transformed into a radiant, confident band who can face the world with unflinching courage. The change is accounted for by certain facts—the fact of the Resurrection, made evident by the repeated appearances of the risen Lord, and His ascension to the right hand of God and His mission of the Spirit. Harnack himself dates St. Paul's conversion, herein differing from most authorities, as early as a year after our Lord's death. He does not question that the record which St. Paul gives us of His resurrection on the third day and His subsequent appearances[2] was what he received from "the primitive community." It was a record of a succession of solid and distinct events. But in Harnack's estimate these supposed events were the projection upon the outward world of their own vivid imagination. Their state of mind produced the supposed events, not real events their state of mind. They felt that Jesus had really, as He said, died for them. They felt that He must have survived death, and that God must vindicate Him. Their Messianic beliefs invested Him with supreme Lordship. And all this, though in reality their faith had failed them under the scandal of the Cross, and God had not vindicated Jesus by any outward event, and He did not come in glory as they expected. Granted the primitive faith, solidly grounded on the experiences recorded in the last chapters of the Gospels and the opening chapters of the Acts, the Church can start on its course, as we see it, in the enthusiasm of conviction. But it was the facts which created the conviction. And apart from the impact of indisputable facts, the moral transformation of the apostles and the triumphant certitude of the Acts are quite unaccountable. Also, I cannot believe that St. Paul's doctrine of the divine Son incarnate would ever have received the unquestioned acceptance which the evidence shows it received, if it had not been grounded beyond question on the Lord's own witness to Himself.

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[1] Lecture IX of *What is Christianity?*

[2] 1 Cor. xv.

It is almost comic to pass from Harnack to Schweitzer, for what is all in all to the one is nothing to the other. For Schweitzer Jesus is hardly an ethical teacher at all. He is an apocalyptic seer of what we cannot but call a fanatical type. He is that and almost nothing else. He created a flaming expectation in the first Jerusalem Church of His speedy coming in the clouds of heaven. Again we note, as with Harnack, that there is nothing admitted to have occurred which accounts for the transformation of the character of the Twelve from utter despondency to confident enthusiasm. But in Harnack's account the first Christians have at least a task before them. There is an ethical gospel—a gospel of divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood—to be preached, and a life to be realized on earth by the community of believers. Christianity is "the Way." But according to Schweitzer they appear to have nothing to do—no divine legacy left them, except the expectation of the Christ coming in the clouds to judge the world, which was not realized. The Christ who has been so potent a factor in human history, who has given to men so new a sense of the worth, here and now, of human personality and human life, has, according to Schweitzer, hardly anything to do with Jesus as in fact He was. He again, like Harnack, only more one-sidedly, has fastened upon one element in the record—the apocalyptic—and has sought to fashion out of it the complete picture, again with the result that the supposed Jesus cannot supply any intelligible explanation of the Church which was called by His name.

In Bousset's and Kirsopp Lake's estimate of history there is even less in the historical Jesus than Harnack or Schweitzer finds there. There is even less any adequate historical cause of the great effect. On the showing of these very radical critics the Catholic Church owes comparatively little to Him except His prophetic teaching about God and the example of His noble life and self-sacrificing death.

Now, is it not the most effective argument against all these three schools of interpreters to show that there is a picture of Jesus of Nazareth, which is formed by taking our records seriously as historical documents, which takes in what each of these groups of interpreters wishes to emphasize, but by taking in also what they severally or all together repudiate (though without any critical ground for their repudiation) can combine all the elements in one strangely compelling and convincing whole, which moreover is obviously adequate—as no one of these partial or one-sided estimates of the "Jesus of History" is—to explain the effects which are summed up in the religion of the New Testament?

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II

Certainly it is easier to examine the views of the critics whom we have been considering than those of our English Modernists. The German and French scholars at any rate express their views as lucidly as possible, and show us quite clearly what they mean and whither they are moving. But the greater number of our English Modernists do not give us this intellectual satisfaction.

The Report of their Conference at Cambridge in the summer of 1921, on Christ and the Creeds,[1] seemed to me to be more markedly characterized by strong statements of what the speakers do not believe than by clear exposition of what they do. It was unfortunate also that the question, what is the best intellectual expression which we can find for the truth about Christ, was crossed and confused by a quite different issue—what is the intellectual obligation involved in the honest recitation of the Creeds. These two issues had better be kept quite distinct, and with the latter we are not concerned in this book. It was also apparent that the speakers at the conference were men holding very different views. Nevertheless the Report made certain things evident.

(1) The Modernist movement as a whole is not, as Dr. Sanday used to try to persuade us to believe, a movement which would be satisfied with eliminating from the Christian creed the affirmation of certain miracles, leaving the ideas about God and the Incarnation untouched. It is a movement which as a whole demands a trenchant rehandling of our doctrine of God and of the person of Christ. It is a clear gain to recognize this. The really root

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[1] Report in *Modern Churchman*, Sept. 1921.

question is the question of what sort is the God in whom we believe.[1]

(2) Some of those who took part in the conference "differ" (as one of them says) "from the Chalcedonian Fathers by holding that the substances of deity and humanity are not two but one. Perfect humanity is deity under human conditions."[2] I have already sought to make it evident that such an idea as this was familiar enough in the Greek world, but is quite contrary to the fundamental Hebrew doctrine of God the Creator, always essentially and fundamentally distinct from all His creatures, which our Lord and His apostles take for granted.[3] That men are portions of God in respect of their reason or spirit—that God would not be complete without man—that a man by becoming good and realizing himself as a rational being would become God or a god—are familiar propositions in certain types of Hellenism and (except the last) in certain types of modern philosophy. But they are flatly contrary to the root conceptions on which our religion was based. The first matter (intellectually speaking) on which we have to make up our minds is whether the Hebrew conception of God, which is the foundation of the Christian religion, is valid—*i.e.* due to a real self-disclosure of God through the Hebrew prophets and Jesus Christ. We only lose time by trying to evade this question. In the volume which preceded this I have sought carefully to examine it, and to give the reasons which seem to me to justify the belief in a positive self-disclosure of God on which the Christian Gospel is based.

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[1] This is admirably emphasized in an article by the Rev. Richard Hanson, "Anglicanism and Modern Problems," *Church Quarterly*, April 1922.

[2] *Report*, pp. 196–8. Again, p. 293. The idea thus expressed, "They treat God and man as two distinct, real existences (substances) each with its own special characteristics," is repudiated as unsatisfactory.

[3] See above, p. 301; and *Belief in God*, chaps. v and vi, pp. 110 and 133.

(3) Others in the Conference repudiated very emphatically the conception which we find so decidedly expressed in St. Paul and St. John of a divine person, pre-existing, who in the fulness of time became man for our salvation.[1] Language is used which suggests the ancient idea of Adoptionism —the idea of a perfectly good man and singularly inspired prophet raised to divine honours and identified with God. Now I associate myself wholly with a remark made by Dr. Kirsopp Lake[2]: "Adoptionism seems to me to have no part or lot in any intelligent modern theology, though it is unfortunately often promulgated, especially in pulpits which are regarded as liberal. We cannot believe that at any time a human being, in consequence of his virtue, became God, which he was not before, or that any human being will ever do so. No doctrine of Christology, and no doctrine of salvation, which is Adoptionist in essence, can ever come to terms with modern thought." I do not think there is any doubt that we have in our day to choose ultimately between the incarnation doctrine of St. Paul and St. John and the Creeds and, on the other hand, the conception of Christ as the best, or one of the best, and most inspired of men, who left to men the heritage of the grandest teaching about the fatherhood of God, and the possibilities of humanity, and the purest example of love and sacrifice, and who, after His death, was deified only in the imagination of His disciples. But I cannot square the record of Jesus, as it stands in the Gospels, presenting such incontestable evidence of reality, or the record of the impression which He made on His disciples, with any merely humanitarian estimate of Him. The bedrock of the Catholic conviction about Jesus is in these earliest records. But on this

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[1] *Report*, pp. 287, 288, 276 f.

[2] *Landmarks in Early Christianity*, pp. 131–2.

I have already said what seems to me the certain truth[1]; and I can only ask my readers to concentrate on this point all their powers of spiritual apprehension, with the sincere desire to reach a decision. Before I take leave of them, I shall ask them to estimate the importance for human life which is involved in that decision.[2] But all that I ask for now is a frank and conscientious exercise of the responsibility of judgment on the facts of the case. Dr. Bethune Baker at the Cambridge Conference spoke of men being "hypnotized by orthodox presuppositions." I seem to see more intelligent people to-day who are hypnotized by unorthodox presuppositions. However, there is no question at present of orthodoxy or unorthodoxy. These words imply an ecclesiastical authority, and no question of ecclesiastical authority has been raised at all. I have been trying to proceed simply as an individual doing his best to form a true judgment in view of all the facts. That seems to be for many minds to-day the first necessity. And I ask for a like frankness on the part of my readers.

III

But there is no doubt that the New Testament doctrine of the person of Christ, while it has inspired and still inspires the faith of millions, also rouses a sense of antagonism in a great many minds—an antagonism of a strength which is peculiar to our time. They feel what can perhaps best be expressed by saying that the doctrine in effect dehumanizes Christ, even if in theory and formally it safeguards His manhood. This Christ, they say, whom you describe as sinless, and who certainly, if the pages of the Gospels can be taken to give an undistorted picture of Him, appears as never betraying any sense of error, moral weakness, or insufficiency—this Christ moreover whom you describe as personally the eternal Son of God manifested in human flesh, and at no moment therefore merely man—makes no appeal to us. His example is of no use to us. What we need for our help and encouragement is a man who is only a man and has no resources but such as are common to men, and no exemptions from human frailties. Only such a Christ could encourage us to believe that we can become as he was.

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[1] See above, p. 342 ff.

[2] See below, p. 610 ff.

Words like these are often used with deep sincerity and real passion. When like words were used to Augustine many centuries ago, he pressed his Pelagian antagonist with the inquiry whether he meant that he wanted a Christ who starts precisely from the common human level of sinfulness; and whether, therefore, he would not, if he were logical, find the most encouraging Christ to be one who had to start with the most evilly disposed nature to tame, and the most unruly lusts and passions to subdue.[1] This is a very shrewd question which the objector would not have found it easy to answer. In fact, if it is merely a question of an encouraging example, the most valuable example for each of us would appear to be the person who starts most completely on his own level. But it is impossible to read the Gospels and not feel that Jesus Christ did not appeal to men primarily or chiefly as an example they could follow. They felt Him to be in some formidable sense above them—teaching and working with a quite extraordinary authority—drawing them with a tremendous claim as from above—claiming, controlling, saving, judging. About this there can be no question, if the Gospels are in any sense historical. And it is no use fashioning a Christ of our own fancy.

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[1] Augustine, c. *Julian. op. imperfect.* iv. cc. 48-57. These are very interesting chapters. See c. 49: "Christus . . . sicut in virtute omnium hominum maximus, ita esse in carne libidinosissimus debuit"; and c. 52: "Sic es amator egregius castitatis ut tibi castior videatur qui concubitus illicitos cupit, sed ut non perprotret, suae cupiditati resistit." Again Christ, according to Julian, should be represented as saying, "Estote ergo casti, quia, ut vobis ad me imitandum obstacula excusationis auferrem, libininosior vobis nasci volui, et tamen maximam libidinem meam concessos fines nunquam transire permisi."

We must not, of course, minimize the reality and value of His human example. Certainly, as St. Peter says, He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. This cannot be too strongly or constantly insisted upon, and we will come back to it. But first of all let us think out the meaning of this plea for an example on our own level. Let us realize the limitations of mere example. The mere example of one individual man upon his fellows tells most when men are living close together under similar conditions—as amongst the crew of a ship, or the soldiers of a regiment, or the boys of a school, or the members of a profession. Anything which suggests difference of conditions weakens the force of mere example and speedily annihilates it. The example of a respectable clergyman's temperance has no effect upon a man living in an uncomfortable cottage with no refuge but the public-house. Difference of race, again, or remoteness of time, almost at once destroys the force of example. An Englishman is not commonly much impressed by the hardness of ancient Spartans or the asceticism of Indian fakirs. Once again the strong sense of what we call genius in another, in proportion to the feeling of uniqueness which it arouses in us, destroys the appeal of his example. In all these ways, it must be acknowledged, the mere example of a Christ who lived nearly two thousand years ago in remote Syria, under conditions utterly unlike ours—one, moreover, who was on all showing a supreme moral genius—would have little effect on us to-day, and indeed would hardly have survived in the memory of men but as a remote legend.

In fact, if you look to the men of supreme moral and religious influence in our race, you find that this influence has depended upon their power of perpetuating themselves in some sort of institution or system of teaching and discipline. The Buddha perpetuated himself in " the way " which he taught—the way of escape into the ultimate Nirvana out of the endless and weary succession of existences; and the success of his method for those who accept his premiss—that life is an evil to be escaped from—has been made evident down the generations in constant examples. What we have to take note of in the case of our Lord is the actual manner in which his example and teaching were in fact perpetuated, and we shall be astonished, and perhaps at first irritated, to find how in fact it was the belief in Him as a person essentially superhuman and divine which alone enabled His influence to become permanently powerful.

When Jesus was living as man among men, it appeared that neither His teaching nor His example was effective with His first disciples. He was altogether too high for them—too unworldly. They failed under the strain He laid upon them and deserted Him. What recovered them was their hardly won faith in His resurrection, which convinced them of His supernatural Sonship, and their consciousness of the divine Spirit—His Father's Spirit and His own—received as a distinctive gift at a memorable moment. Thereby they realized Christ as their living Lord who from heaven was inspiring, guiding, governing and enriching them with an inward power. So it was that His outward example, their memory of which is recorded in the Gospels, became something quite different from the mere example of a departed hero. The example living in their memory was the pattern of humanity, or "the way," in accordance with which He was moulding them from heaven by His Spirit. It was only "in Christ" that they could follow Christ. But it was only because He was something more than man—something in respect of which they would have felt it madness to equal themselves with Him—that He could be living in them and they in Him—that He could thus have access to their inmost souls, and remake them, and "dwell in their hearts by faith."

And this has been true for all successive generations of Christians. The example of Christ has been of supreme importance. He called Himself the Son of Man, or the Man. That pattern of glorious manhood—glorious in all its relations, Godward and manward, and not least in its matchless self-control—has appealed to men in each successive generation as presenting an ideal before which all cynicism is put to flight. Here is the man whose life is altogether worthy of fullest admiration. If He is the real man, there remains no manner of doubt in our hearts that the life of a man, even under extremest conditions of failure and suffering, is altogether worth living. But in its supreme perfection it would seem to us, as it seemed to the first disciples, an example of despair. It postulates for life forces and powers which we seem to lack. And, in fact, He appears in the Gospels as claiming a mastery over other men's lives which it is not for a mere man to claim. But He did not end by setting an example. He died, but He is still alive. That is the point of the Christian belief. It concerns "one Jesus who was dead, whom Paul," and all Christians since, have "affirmed to be alive." Yes, alive in the heavens—the same Son of God who came down from heaven to redeem our nature from within by Himself taking it, and exalting it into the glory of God; and who thus alive in the heavens is alive in us also by His Spirit, moulding us inwardly into the pattern of the life He showed us outwardly in word and work. There is no possibility of question that this is the way in which Christ's example has in fact appealed to men in the succession of generations. They have studied "the life," "the way," in the pages of the Gospel, as described in His words and as lived in His conduct, and also as reflected in countless saints who were His true disciples; and however low the level at which they may have started to become His disciples and to imitate Him, however degraded and polluted they have felt their manhood to be, they have not despaired, because they believed in Him, not only as their pattern of manhood, but as their Redeemer. In His name they have known themselves to be set free from all the guilt of the past and to be given that incomparable blessing, the forgiveness of their sins—that is, the opportunity, constantly renewed, of a fresh start free from the burden of the past. From Him again they have received that without which example and absolution would have been alike useless—the gift of the Spirit, poured into them out of His heavenly manhood to purge and strengthen and renew them inwardly after the pattern which in His human life He had shown them outwardly. No one can doubt that this has been the way in which Christ has exerted His influence and made His example effective down the centuries like the example of no other man. This sort of influence has a sort of analogy in the influence of other men over their fellows. But in His case there has been an "influence" or "inflowing" of Him into all those who have accepted Him as their Master which has been quite distinctive. Of no mere man could it be said that he could thus gain effective entry into the very centre of the personalities of all other men, so as to renew them from the roots of their being by his spirit, and make them "in him" new men. That is a recreative act which, in the full sense in which it has been experienced from the first, can be assigned to none other than Him "in whom we live and move and are."

Unless I am very much mistaken, there is singularly prevalent to-day, especially in the English-speaking world, what is, I am persuaded, at the bottom an irrational pride—the sort of pride which is rooted in a wholly false view of human independence—which is only willing to accept a doctrine of incarnation if it be understood as the incarnation of God in humanity at large, of which the incarnation in Christ is only what I may call the foremost specimen. According to this presentation, I am to see in Christ what I have it in me to become. He demonstrates the power of the divine Spirit in humanity in a sense which, without Him, I should never perhaps have suspected, but which, once instructed by Him, I can realize in myself without needing from Him anything but the light of His example. He says to us, in effect, "You can all be Christs like me, if you will." But this is the most astonishingly unhistorical representation. I do not mean merely that the matter is not so represented in the New Testament, but that it has not so been realized in Christian experience.

However, the highest type of Christian experience may be found in the New Testament. And what we find there does, to a degree which startles us, negate the manner of thinking and speaking which I have just tried to describe.

In the New Testament there is scarcely a hint to be found of a universal gift of the Spirit of God to men because they are men.[1] There *is* suggested a universal presence to all men of the divine Light which is the Word of God,[1] but the Spirit, who makes the light effectual, is, as a matter of fact, represented as given only through the Risen Christ to those who believe in Him, and as a gift communicated at a definable moment. Let us confine ourselves for the moment to the historical or literary facts. I am *not* saying that the New Testament excludes the idea that the Holy Spirit is in such sense "the giver of life," as that wherever life is, and especially wherever rational and moral life is, He Himself must be. This is indeed suggested in the Old Testament. There God's spirit or breath is said to be in all things and to inspire the natural gifts of all men, as well as the special endowments of the prophets. As the Book of Wisdom says, "the spirit of the Lord filleth the world." And the orthodox theology of the Holy Trinity makes such an assumption inevitable. Thus we are *not* to agree with Origen, who would seemingly have actually *limited* the activity of the Holy Spirit within the circle of "the saints," or the believing Church. It is not for us so to limit God's activity. The Spirit, like the wind which represents Him, "bloweth where it listeth." Nevertheless, from end to end of the New Testament the gift of the Spirit is only contemplated first as given to John the Baptist, the prophet who is to prepare for Christ,[2] then as especially the agent in the conception of Christ,[3] then as imparted to Christ for the fulfilment of His mission,[4] and, finally, as to be expected from Him and as actually poured out by Him upon those who believe in Him. Thus in the Gospels men are expected to see in Christ the action of the Holy Spirit, and it is blasphemy against

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[1] James iv 5 is, of course, very difficult. If it means "He [God] jealously longs for the spirit which He [at our original creation, when He breathed into our nostrils the breath of life] caused to

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dwell in us," as Dr. Hort interprets, then there is no reference here to anything but the spirit of man, which is distinct from the Spirit of God.

[1] John i 9.

[2] Luke i 15, also ii 25 ff. to Simeon.

[3] Luke i 35.

[4] Mark i 10.

the Spirit to attribute His works to the evil one. And the disciples are to expect the Spirit as a future endowment which they have not yet received. This, of course, is in a very marked way the teaching of the Fourth Gospel: "The Spirit was not yet (given), because Jesus was not yet glorified."[1] "My Father will give you another Paraclete in my name," or "I will send him unto you."[2] But it is also the teaching of St. Luke at the beginning of the Acts. There the disciples are anxiously to await a gift which they have not yet received, and the gift is represented as communicated in an objective form under memorable conditions on the day of Pentecost. Afterwards, also, the gift appears as given in an objective manner in baptism followed by the laying on of hands.[3] The disciples of John the Baptist at Ephesus need to be instructed about the gift of the Holy Ghost and to receive Him in due manner.[4]

Even the saintly Roman soldier Cornelius, with the pious group around him, though his prayers and alms have already gained him acceptance with God, and though God makes evident by a visible manifestation that He has given him His Spirit, must receive at least the outward form of baptism.[5] So important it is to make it evident that the New Israel only, the Church of Jesus Christ, is the home or sphere of the Spirit. I suppose that if you had asked a New Testament disciple what it is to be a Christian, he would have given one of two replies—either that a Christian is one who believes that Jesus is Lord or that he is one who has "received the Spirit" of God. St. Paul uses the phrase as equivalent to being a Christian. "Received ye the Spirit," he asks, "by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" It is not possible to state too strongly that the Spirit is, in the New Testament, regarded as possessing the Church, and as not to be expected or looked for except as received from Christ and within the membership of His society.

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[1] John vii 39.
[2] John xiv 16, xv 26.
[3] Acts viii 7–18.
[4] xix 1–6.
[5] Acts x 24–47.

Let us then sum the matter up. Thank God the New Testament sets no limit to the activity of the divine Spirit. Nay, it may truly be said that it is blasphemy against the Spirit to deny His activity wherever we see active goodness among men. But it is true that the New Testament deliberately concentrates our attention upon the new gift of the Spirit as given in Christ and through Christ. It tells us that all that we see in the man Christ is to be made common to all men of good will—but it adds "in Christ" and "through Christ." It addresses mankind as needing to be redeemed, and the effective evidence of such redemption is found in the gift of the Spirit communicated to them as a newly-given gift from Christ. We are all to be anointed by the same Spirit which possessed Him—we are all (if you will) to be Christs—but it is not as individuals in our own right. That right we are left to suppose we have lost and can only recover in Christ.[1] It is idle to dispute that this is the message of the Bible. Thus there is truly to be an incarnation of God in humanity, but it is in the New Humanity, through Christ, by deliberate faith and conscious incorporation into His society. That is the message declared and covenanted and open. What lies in the secret counsels of God for humanity beyond the area of this message, or where the message has been misunderstood because misdelivered, is not part of the message, though it may be part of the hope of the human heart which has been taught in Christ that God is justice and love, and that there is no limit to His love.

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[1] John i 12, "As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God."

Then to wind all this up. I think no one who considers how the Catholic Church has blurred the full message of Christ's humanity and His human example—of which we shall have sad occasion to speak—can be anyway surprised if such unfaithfulness has led to violent reactions of feeling against the Church and the message of the Church. But after all, what we want to know is the truth about the Christian message: and also we make an eager appeal to the specifically Christian experience. Of the Christian message then as the New Testament expounds it and as Christian experience over the centuries has on the whole confirmed it, I say this without hesitation: that it does not proclaim a Christ whose human example would have sufficed for us: or a Christ who is only a specimen of the forces of manhood which we all already carry within ourselves. It proclaims Christ the Man indeed, but the man whom we need as our saviour as well as our example—whom we need to make us new men, through faith in Him and by the receiving of His Spirit, in such a way as is inconceivable unless He is all along something much more than man. So that the very features of the Person which seem to remove His example furthest from us appear at the last as the very conditions of its being brought close to us in permanently effective power.

IV

There is another kind of objection taken to the doctrine of Christ as really the manifestation of God in manhood, on the ground of doubts about His moral perfection. I am sure, for instance, that there are a good many honest people who feel that our Lord's tremendous denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees[1] are indiscriminating and violent—that they would indeed be in the spirit of the Old Testament, but that, if Christ really uttered them, they were not worthy of Him.

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[1] Matt. xxii, Mark xii 38–40, Luke xx 45–7.

Again, the "cursing of the barren fig-tree," taken as it stands in Mark, is described as expressing a spirit of sudden anger, unreasoning and revengeful; so that the critics, who are very skilful in getting rid of what they do not like, very commonly seek to exclude it as a historical incident from the narrative, and represent it as a parable misunderstood. I do not think they are successful. For it stands a very vividly described incident in St. Mark's narrative, with details which seem singularly precise and convincing.[1] It is true that St. Mark's explanatory phrase, "for the time of figs was not yet," appears to be misleading. What our Lord was apparently expecting to feed upon were the green knops (? the "green figs" of Cant. ii 13) which appear on the fig-tree before the leaves, and without which any leafy fig-tree will, of course, be barren for the year. These green knops are, we are informed, still commonly eaten in Palestine. Not finding any, our Lord discerned in the fig-tree the type of an outward show of life (the leaves) which is in fact unfruitful, and He pronounced a solemn doom on this deceitful show. It seems to me a miracle of judgment very penetrating in its significance. I do not feel the least inclined either to doubt the fact or to apologize for it.

As to the denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees, they may perhaps have been directed, not against all the scribes and Pharisees, but against a certain class or section of them. But if the Gospels and St. Paul represent the historical situation with any fidelity, these rigid maintainers of Jewish orthodoxy and tradition were as a class deeply corrupted by formalism, self-righteousness, hypocrisy and self-seeking.[1] Our Lord does not appear anywhere to have denounced the principle of ecclesiastical authority or ceremonial observance—to this question we will come back in the next volume—but, if we consider what the characteristic vices of ecclesiastical authority have been in many ages when the Church was seemingly powerful, and the awful hindrance to the spiritual influence of Christ's religion which these characteristic vices of ecclesiastics have proved themselves to be, we shall surely feel that the Master of human life, who discerned so deeply its tendencies and dangers, had good cause to utter even the tremendous denunciations which are ascribed to Him of pride and selfishness parading themselves in the guise of religion. Again I cannot apologize or explain away. I know indeed that there is a spirit in our age which would like to eliminate out of its conception of God the whole element of fiery indignation, whether against false religion or any other kind of sin. "I believe," writes one of our modernists, "that we shall come to see that it is precisely those contemporary ideas of the wrath of God and His ultimate avenging activity as destroying Judge, which are the unauthentic elements in the teaching ascribed to Jesus."[2] Language like this, I confess, makes me shiver. I feel sure in my conscience that if God is really as the prophets disclose Him, and sin is essentially what the Bible represents it as being—and the deepest spiritual experience of Christendom has given its assent to the representation—the wrath of God against sin and the awfulness of final judgment remain a quite essential and permanent element of "the truth as it is in Jesus." Thus I read our Lord's tremendous "dooms" with awe and terror indeed, but not with any expectation that the enlightened conscience of men will ever have cause to wish them away. Without them the picture of Jesus would fail altogether to represent the whole truth about God.

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[1] Mark xi 12 ff., 20 ff.

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[1] See Rom. ii 17–23, and, besides the passages in the note on p. 479, Luke xvi 14.

[2] Mr. Emmet in the *Modern Churchman*, p. 221.

It is, of course, sometimes pleaded that we have no right to claim for our Lord moral perfection in the fullest sense—that in fact He disclaimed such goodness when He said to the young man "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God."[1] But it is, I think, certainly a mistake so to interpret His words. In the Gospels generally our Lord seems to present Himself to His disciples as an infallible guide and teacher and pattern. There is not in all our Lord's words (other than the words in question) the slightest sign of the consciousness of sin or of the fear of going wrong. Certainly He cannot have disclaimed goodness, even in the highest sense, with any kind of consistency. And the saying in question admits of a very natural interpretation of a different kind. This young man came in a spirit that was both self-complacent and flattering. Doubtless he both wanted to make himself agreeable and to receive commendation. It was a cheap thing to say "Good Master," and our Lord pulls him up. "Young man, think what goodness means when you call me good." I do not think our Lord either disclaims goodness, nor, on the other hand, that He means, as some orthodox commentators have suggested, that He is good because He is God. I think He simply means that the goodness the young man is in search of is to be found in God only, and he is not to give flattering titles to men.

There are at least three occasions where our Lord appears in the Gospels as simply challenging men to think before they speak—not to make glib statements, or use convenient arguments which intellectual or moral consistency ought to make them shrink from. Thus He confronts the glib and constant statement of the scribes, that the Christ was to be the son of David [1] with the language of the psalm, held to be David's, where he appears to address the future Christ as Lord, and He asks how David could call His future son his "Lord." I do not think it is at all necessary to suppose that Christ was here making any pronouncement on the authorship of the psalm. He was simply pressing upon the scribes the duty of thinking before they spoke—His meaning being that their account of the Christ was proved to be inadequate by their own Scriptures. So in the same way we should interpret the strange passage, referred to earlier, in St. John,[2] where our Lord appears to minimize the meaning of the title "Son of God." Such a minimizing interpretation, however, is flatly contrary to the general teaching of this Gospel. What our Lord must have meant is that, at least in some sense, His opponents must recognize divine sonship in the case of anyone who represents in any way the authority of God. In all these cases mistaken conclusions have been drawn from the words of Jesus—as that He did not claim goodness, or that He disowned sonship to David, or that He meant little by calling Himself Son of God. These conclusions are shown to be mistaken by the general sense of His teaching. What He was doing in these cases was to insist on men's thinking before they spoke—thinking whether a convenient argument or lightly uttered word was not really incompatible with what intellectual consistency or moral seriousness would force them to acknowledge. And this is surely a very important lesson.

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[1] St. Mark x 18 and Luke xviii 18. St. Matthew seems to tone the saying down (xix 17).

But we return to our main thesis. It is indeed the case that we could hardly believe the doctrine of the Incarnation, if we saw evidence of hasty passion and moral imperfection in Jesus, or if He appeared to have confessed to being deficient in goodness. But such evidences and confessions are not really to be found. The character of Jesus, as the Gospels describe Him, remains in the moral region supreme and perfect—so impressive, I think, in its majesty, that it hushes in our minds the first suggestions of criticism.

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[1] Mark xii 35.

[2] John x 36. See above, pp. 408–9.

V

Finally we have the suggestion to consider, that Jesus showed Himself in certain respects unmistakably deluded—the victim of current errors. Without asking what kind of belief concerning Jesus would be compatible with the acceptance of such a suggestion, let us first of all consider carefully and frankly the facts of the case.

We are bound to recognize in Jesus a real limitation of knowledge. He Himself—in a saying which cannot be supposed to have been invented for Him, but which is assuredly authentic—declared Himself ignorant of the day and hour of the end of the world. He had no map of the future spread before His eyes. He, the Son of God—at least in His mortal life—was limited in knowledge and knew His limitation. Thus there is no sign whatever that He transcended the knowledge of natural things common to His Palestinian contemporaries. Also, there is no pretension of knowledge on any such subject. There is in His teaching none of the "science falsely so-called," which abounds in the contemporary apocalypses. He cannot be said to have given any teaching at all on any subject except on the great spiritual subjects. And on these He seems to speak with a sense of full authority amounting to infallibility.

I cannot resist that impression. "Verily, I say unto you." That is enough.[1]

But there are certain points on which our Lord is commonly supposed to have given positive teaching which was in fact erroneous.

1. He is supposed to have proclaimed His own immediate coming in glory and the end of "this world." I have dealt with this point at length.[2] The conclusion which the facts seem to me to warrant is that our Lord expressly disclaimed knowledge of the time and season of the end, and expressly warned His disciples against supposing that God intended such knowledge for them, though His disciples, or some of them, misunderstood Him. There is no real warrant for ascribing delusion to our Lord's mind on the subject. Under this head no more will be said here.

2. He is perceived to have shared the current belief in devils and diabolic possession; and this, it is taken for granted, was no more than a superstition which we have outgrown.

Now I am not disposed to deny that in this matter also there may have been occasional misunderstandings on the part of His disciples. As I read the account of the healing of the Gadarene, or Gerasene, demoniac in St. Mark (Mark v 1–17), it suggests itself somewhat readily that the supposed permission given by Jesus for the entry of the "legion" of demons into the swine may have been a misinterpretation on the part of the disciples. And sometimes, when our Lord is speaking of evil spirits, He undoubtedly uses metaphorical language.[3] But I think it is quite certain that He did believe in evil and in good spirits, and in their activity among men; and not only did He believe this, but

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[1] On our Lord's use of "Amen," see Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, pp. 226 ff.

[2] Chap. V, p. 432.

[3] *E.g.* Luke xi 24–7.

He made it a quite distinct element in His teaching. He would have His disciples look out upon the world as a scene in which the conflict of good and evil is not merely carried on among men. Behind the activities of bad men He sees an awful invisible agency organizing and maintaining a kingdom of evil and enslaving the souls of men. "An enemy hath done this"—an evil will or army of wills, set to thwart the good purpose of God.[1] And in various widespread kinds of disease He recognized evil spirits as possessing men and women, and constantly dealt with them accordingly.

But have we the right to class all this as delusions which we have outgrown? Certainly, as to the existence of spirits and their activity among men there has been a very widespread assent given by the conscience of men, and of men of the profoundest spiritual insight. The testimony of such a man as Frederick Denison Maurice is very impressive.[2] I do not think our knowledge authorizes any denial of it. It seems to me that not only the personal experience of individual souls but the spectacle of the organization and continuity of evil influences in the world, suggests the truth of the explanation which our Lord certainly adopted as His own. And as to the reality of diabolic possession, I have been again and again deeply impressed by the testimony of missionaries in non-Christian countries, that they are not able to doubt it. "It may or may not exist in England," they say, "but it certainly exists in India or China or Africa."

On the whole—in view of the deep mystery of evil in the world—I fail to see what right men have to treat the belief in evil spirits and their activity, or the belief in good spirits or angels, as error and delusion, or as childish fancy which the mature mind outgrows. But one point must be kept steadily in view. The whole world in our Lord's time, and Palestine not less than other districts, was weighed down by the terror of evil spirits, just as a great part of the world is to-day. Jesus no doubt affirmed that they really existed and were the cause of numberless moral and physical evils. But He would not suffer men to remain in dread of them. His whole teaching was of redemption. If men would trust God, they could be free—free from the fear of evil spirits and from the fear of death. And He was come to lead them to this liberty. So He is recorded to have said to the Seventy: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall in any wise hurt you."[1] No doubt it was this sense of victory over the powers of evil among Christians which, as much as anything, promoted the spread of the Church. Thus the characteristic of Christians should not be their belief in the activity of evil spirits, but their belief that they are impotent against the Redeemer of men.

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[1] See Mark iii 22–30; Luke xi 17–26 (the obvious metaphors do not conceal the also obvious intention of teaching truth); Matt. xiii 28; Luke x 18, xiii 16, xxii 31, etc.

[2] See my *St. John's Epistles*, pp. 145 ff.

3. There is lastly the assertion to be considered that our Lord gave positive teaching about the Old Testament which identifies Him with traditional ideas about that literature which modern critical science has shown to be untrue. I think this is an exaggeration. On the whole our Lord's teaching about the Old Testament is most remarkable for its profound spiritual truth. No doubt, as He spoke of the sun rising, so He spoke of the Books of the Law as by Moses and the Psalter as by David, and drew lessons from the narratives without any question being raised of their historical character.

[1] Luke x 18–19.

It would have been impossible to do otherwise, if He was freely to use human language intelligible to the people of Galilee or the Rabbis of Jerusalem. I should suppose that He did not know what the progress of critical science has made fairly evident to us, but I should suppose also that there was in His own consciousness a great distinction clearly present between what He did know—the spiritual content of His message—and all the popular assumptions of knowledge on matters which were not within His scope. On matters not within the scope of His mission, He appears as giving no positive teaching at all.

The only occasion on which it seems to me that it can be plausibly pleaded that He laid stress upon a question of authorship or literary character in books of the Bible was in His argument about Ps. cx. On that occasion the verbal difference between the narratives of the three Evangelists makes it evident that we cannot rely on having the precise words of Christ. On the other hand His purpose is quite plain. It is not, as some moderns would have us believe, to repudiate the Davidic descent of the Christ, but to make it plain that the Scribes, if they were true to their accepted principles, would not be able to speak as if the Christ was to be the Son of David and nothing more. They must recognize Him as David's Lord as well as David's Son. I think it is quite enough for the fair interpretation of the passage to represent our Lord as confronting the Scribes with the requirements of their own lore, without laying any stress on it Himself. I have already pointed out that this sort of *argumentum ad hominem* appears to have been characteristic of our Lord. I should like to repeat that I believe there must have been in His own consciousness a vast region of common assumptions which He was content to take for granted without confusing them with the things which He *knew*.[1] Thus as concerns the argument about Ps. cx, I do not think we are compelled either to force men in the name of Jesus to accept a theory of authorship which seems to us very improbable, or to declare Christ mistaken. The question belonged to a region of knowledge in which He knew that He had no commission, and in which knowledge beyond that of His contemporaries would, in fact, not have helped but hindered His mission.

As to the bearing of our Lord's limited human knowledge on the theory of the Incarnation, more will be said in the next chapter. Here I want only to draw a distinction, which I think the facts warrant, between limitation of knowledge which must be acknowledged in Him and anything which can be called delusion or the teaching of error, of which I cannot see the traces.

I know there are many good men who would say that we can believe that our Lord was really the victim of certain current delusions and taught in accordance with these delusions, without affecting our faith in the reality of the Incarnation as St. Paul and St. John believed it. Here I admit I stumble. But I need not pursue the question, because I dispute the premiss. I see no positive delusion or error in the teaching of Jesus. The truth of what He can fairly be said to have taught seems to me to stand secure, in spite of all the developments of science and changes of human circumstance.

I have been seeking in this chapter only to show what seems to me the essential weakness and one-sidedness of each of the various humanitarian estimates of Christ, and to obviate the objections which are made against the doctrine of His person as St. Paul and St. John present it to us. There is always, however, something unsatisfactory about the result of saying no to a string of objections. Each answer may seem in turn fairly satisfactory, but there remains the sense that there is or may be "something in them." And, in fact, on a subject so great and mysterious as the person of Christ, it is absurd to suppose that everything will be clear. I have done my best with each of the objections in turn, and I am not without hope that the answer in each case will be felt to be stronger than the objection. But it is quite certain that it is not by any such negative process that any real conviction will be won. The real conviction must come from the study of the positive picture in the Gospels. It must be the gradually growing assurance that this picture is not one which can be due to human invention or imagination. It must overwhelm us with the sense of its truth, and with the sense that only the doctrine of the Incarnation can really interpret it or account for it. And toward this sort of conviction the removal of objections and the consideration of particular literary problems only make a very partial contribution. The conviction itself must be of the sort suggested by Jesus Himself when He said of Peter's first conviction of His Messiahship: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven," and of the sort which St. Paul meant when he said, "No man can say *Jesus is Lord* but in the Holy Spirit."

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[1] On the limitations of our Lord's knowledge within the sphere of His mortal life as man, see below. pp. 521 ff.

Certainly it is not the case that our deepest and most important convictions are those which involve least difficulty, or those against which fewest objections can be plausibly urged. Certainly also, as concerns the faith in Christ's person, the Evangelists do not, on the whole, give us the impression that they sought to remove difficulties for faith out of their records. On the whole they give us the impression of candour and naïveté in a high degree. It is not pleaded therefore that there are no difficulties about the traditional faith in Christ. What is pleaded is that, if all the facts are frankly faced, the only conception which adequately accounts for them is the conception which the first Church was led to form—the conception of the incarnation of the Son of God—the doctrine of "the Word made flesh." [1]

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[1] Since this chapter was written I have been impressed by the number of cases in which the main hindrance to belief in Christ appears to be the supposed impracticability of His demand for world-renunciation. On this see *Can We then Believe*, pp. 188 ff.

CHAPTER VII

THE DEFINITIONS OF THE COUNCILS CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST

We have been carefully reviewing the New Testament, and we have seen good reason for reaching the conclusion that only the conception of Jesus as the eternal Son of God incarnate is adequate to account for the facts of the case—that is especially the spiritual authority claimed and exercised by Him, which so plainly passes the limits of legitimate human influence, and His own occasional utterances about Himself; or, to view the matter from the side of the disciples, the awestruck devotion passing into worship which they experienced, and which they expressed after the Resurrection by calling their Master "the Lord" in a sense which certainly involves divine sovereignty. And we noted how carefully this conception of the Lord's person was expressed by St. Paul and St. John and in the Epistle to the Hebrews upon the background of, and consistently with, the traditional monotheism of the Jews, and how it was apparently accepted throughout the apostolic churches without controversy or demur—how it is implied in the New Testament writings where it is not explicit.

I

Merely considered as literary documents—the earliest which remain to us concerning the origin of Christianity—the books of the New Testament, or almost all of them, stand by themselves in importance. They alone represent the creative period of the Christian Church, in the sense that all the later literature represents an attitude of conscious dependence upon a message already delivered. Thus (1) we know practically nothing about our Lord except what we find in the New Testament. Among the few sayings ascribed to Him which are preserved outside the New Testament only one has any bearing upon the question of His person—that which occurs among His sayings in a papyrus discovered not long ago on the site of Oxyrhynchus in Egypt[1]: "Where one is alone, so am I with him. Raise the stone and there you will find me; cleave the wood and there am I too." This, if it were a genuine saying, would seem to ascribe to our Lord Himself a declaration of His universal presence in nature. But he would indeed be bold who would assert its genuineness. As Dr. Burkitt says, these brief sayings seem to represent an early Egyptian amalgamation of Hellenistic and Christian ideas. And the apocryphal "Gospels" which remain to us serve no purpose at all except to show how poor a thing the early Christian imagination proved to be when it sought to invent further accounts of our Lord's infancy or childhood, or of His appearances after His resurrection. Again (2) there is no other record of the first life of the Christian Church except St. Luke's in the Acts. (3) As to the Epistles, it would be impossible to make a brief statement about the signs of their early diffusion and influence which would be sufficiently accurate. Certainly some of St. Paul's most characteristic ideas as concerning justification by faith and the relation of Grace to Law did not deeply influence the early Church. Plainly they had not understood him. But as far as the conception of Christ's person is concerned, the doctrine of the incarnation of the pre-existent divine Son in Jesus the Christ is the accepted tradition behind the earliest sub-apostolic writers—Clement, Barnabas, Ignatius, Hermas and the Apologists.[1] It holds the field before the Christian Church had any New Testament.

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[1] See Grenfell and Hunt, *Logia Iesou* (1897), p. 12.

This is what the ordinary Christian has not grasped. The earliest Christian Church had a collection of Holy Scriptures; but it was simply the Old Testament canon. It is marvellous with what unanimity the Gentiles, who very soon swallowed up the Jewish element in the Church, accepted the Jewish foundation and the Jewish Scriptures. It was long before they collected their apostolic writings into a canon. The history of this formation of a canon is obscure, as very much is obscure in the earliest Christian history. But by the middle of the second century the four Gospels were practically canonized, and doubtless from very early days the apostolic Epistles were read in the churches to which they were addressed, and began to pass from church to church. However, for the first hundred years of the Church's existence it had no Bible—no standard of reference —except the Old Testament and "the tradition"— that is, the teaching first given in each local church by its apostolic founder, fortified by the constant intercourse between the different churches. We have already seen that the writers of the Epistles can take for granted a certain "tradition" as known to those they wrote to; and from what they take for granted we can more or less gather the content of the tradition in the different churches.[2]

So equipped, then, the young churches started on their career in a world singularly well adapted to puzzle and bewilder them. For the Hellenistic world of the Roman Empire was in a state of intellectual ferment. It was not a day of great philosophers, but it was a day when intellectual interest was keen. Men were widely seeking some doctrine of the "whence" and the "whither"—some doctrine of how the world which seems so evil was made and is governed—and how the hapless soul of man is to escape from the changes and chances of this mortal life into some region of calm and security and immortality. And the cities were full of teachers and lecturers—who had each of them a "gnosis," a "knowledge" or theory of his own, which was either divulged to all who would come and listen, or reserved as a secret for the initiates into this or that "mystery-cult." Christianity spread rapidly because of its moral attractiveness, and especially probably because of its practical spirit of brotherhood. And there were multitudes of "gnostics" who were ready enough to adopt the Christian ideas and sacred names, and adjust them to their cosmic theories. So the Christian churches found themselves in a bewildering world of speculation and of fusion between different systems and traditions, and they were forced to clear up their ideas and to know their own mind. Moreover, though Christianity had qualities which made it popular, it had others which rendered it profoundly unpopular. It was suspected of being a secret society, disloyal to the Emperor and the Empire. It was thus always subject to persecution, because it was supposed to encourage the dangerous elements in society. And the darkest stories were told about its nocturnal gatherings and secret orgies. So, not only was it driven by its inner necessities to obtain a clear account of its own doctrine, it was also driven to explain itself to those outside, and to seek to remove the suspicions of the authorities. This is the origin of the "Apologies," and it is the apologists of the second century who made the first attempt to present, in terms acceptable and intelligible to the outside world, an explanation of Christianity as a doctrine and as a way of life.

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[1] See appended note at the end of the chapter, p. 524, on Hermas the Didache, etc.

[2] See *Belief in God*, pp. 207 ff.

Of these apologists let us take Justin Martyr as an example. He had found his way to Christianity through disappointment with the various philosophies. But he retained his philosopher's dress, and would still present the doctrine in which he had found satisfaction so as to be intelligible and acceptable in the world that he had left. He made great play with the *Logos*-doctrine, that is the doctrine of the divine reason and energy immanent in the universe, which, as we have seen, was the popular idea of the day, and one which Christianity could use in its own sense. But he is not by any means a sure-footed theologian, and he falls into modes of expression which he had much better not have used, and which the Church after him had to repudiate—as when he talked of the Word or Son of God as a "second God."[1] So it was with the pious but somewhat stupid prophet Hermas, of Rome. He too means well and gives fervent exhortations to his fellow Christians through the medium of his visions. But again he is not at all a clear thinker, and his phraseology is loose. But all the while the Christian churches in the different cities were closely knit together and intensely conscious of unity. Thus as we survey the early period we seem to see the Church as a whole standing before the world, with grand moral steadfastness and an intense sense of practical security in its tradition of religious belief and practice, but subjected to an intellectual cross-questioning of a very puzzling kind. Will you admit this? Do you believe that? Will you accept this suggestion? Will you accommodate yourself to that popular theory? And the Church made many mistakes in its haste, and corrected them somewhat painfully at its leisure. Only gradually and hardly did it fashion its terminology, chiefly by the help of certain men who relatively deserve the title of great men: Irenaeus,[1] whose intellectual perceptions were very sure; Tertullian, the African, who was much more brilliant and also much more rhetorical and one-sided; and Origen of Alexandria, who, in spite of certain very precarious speculations and excursions into the unknowable, was the greatest of all.

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[1] See below, p. 538

Now it is obvious that this process cannot be described in detail in one chapter in a small volume. I propose to make only one or two general observations before we approach the age when the Church, in formal councils, gave certain dogmatic definitions of its doctrine of the person of Christ, to which we must pay more precise attention.

The chief intellectual difficulties of the Church were (1) with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity—that is especially the relation of the Son, conceived of as an eternal and divine person, to God the Father and to the Holy Spirit. It was in this region that it found the greatest difficulty in fixing its terminology: (2) in maintaining its hold on the real humanity of Christ. The Hellenistic world was still possessed with the sense that the source of spiritual contamination for souls lay in the body and the material world, and that the redemption of the soul lay in its exemption from matter. And following on this conception of matter as evil was a horror of the idea of any real incarnation of God. The Church could not remain uninfluenced by this tendency. Thus we have a whole series of attempts—Docetism and all the varieties of Gnosticism—to explain away the reality of Christ's physical manhood; and all such attempts appear to have met with a great deal of sympathy and success. Tertullian, looking back on the history of Gnosticism at the beginning of the third century, can speak of the dismal experience which the Church had passed through of seeing "one and another, the most faithful, the wisest, the most experienced in the Church, going over to the wrong side."[1] Meanwhile there was comparatively little difficulty in maintaining the originally divine nature or deity of Christ. The popular instinct was all on this side.

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[1] See on Irenaeus *Belief in God*, p. 47. Dr. Rashdall has strangely accused him of what later was called Apollinarianism (see *Jesus Human and Divine*, p. 13). But Irenaeus gives us an account of our Lord's temptations, according to which the divine Word left the man or the manhood in Jesus to struggle and suffer unaided in those dark hours. *ὥσπερ γὰρ ἦν ἄνθρωπος, ἵνα πειράσθῃ, οὕτως καὶ λόγος ἵνα δοξασθῇ· ἡσυχάζοντος μὲν τοῦ λόγου ἐν τῷ πειράζεσθαι,* etc. (iii 19, 3). The phraseology may be easily criticized. But it certainly quite clearly means that Irenaeus thought of Christ as having a properly human mind and will in which to be tempted and struggle. Again, he says: "He struggled and overcame: He was man fighting for His fathers, and by His obedience paying the debt of their disobedience. . . ." And in order to fight the human fight fully "He passed through every age, from infancy to manhood, restoring to each communion with God" (iii 18, 6, 7). He was what He seemed—really man (ii 22). See my *Dissertations*, pp. 108 ff. I cannot think what caused Dr. Rashdall to make such a statement.

The ablest opponent of this fundamental article of faith was a brilliant but morally disagreeable man—Paul, the bishop of Samosata, the favourite and courtier of Zenobia, the Queen of Palmyra. His doctrine is broadly the same as one we are made familiar with to-day—that the person Jesus did not exist till He was born of Mary; that the divine Word or Wisdom (conceived of as a quality or aspect of God and not as a person) dwelt in him as it dwells in other men, but in a unique degree, so as gradually to deify him, till from having been a man he became God. The support which Zenobia gave her favourite made it very difficult for the local episcopate to secure his deposition. But as soon as Zenobia was defeated by the Emperor Aurelian his strength was gone. It would seem that he had no popular support in the Church, though he became indirectly the parent of an intellectual school of which Arianism was the fruit.

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[1] *de praescr.* 3.

This very rough sketch must suffice to bring us to the period of the Councils. The reason why we must consider their dogmatic definitions is not because they represent the action of ecclesiastical authority, for with that at present we are not concerned, but because, viewed historically, the teaching about the person of Christ which we get in the New Testament, and which we find from the first as the tradition of the Church, seems here to reach its intellectual expression, or at least its technical formulation. That at least was the claim made for these formulas —that they represented no new doctrine and no addition to the doctrine of the Bible and the tradition of the Church, but were simply its expression in an articulate form with a view to defending it against the invasion of proposed interpretations of Christ which would have fundamentally destroyed the Church tradition in its real meaning. The question for us is whether this is really so, or whether, on the other hand, the definitions are encumbrances which the faith of the New Testament would have done better to dispense with, or which, even if they were once necessary, are now certainly to be regarded as antiquated expressions of the faith in terms of a philosophy which has been long outgrown, and for which we can surely find better substitutes in the language of modern thought, retaining the ancient formulas only as historical records. This is a very insistent question to-day; and though we are not yet in a position to pay regard to the question of ecclesiastical authority, we can discuss these formulas very profitably on their merits.

II

The first occasion for an ecclesiastical dogma was found in the heresy of Arius. He was a clever and influential parish priest of Alexandria who was one of the numerous pupils of a famous teacher, Lucian of Antioch, a martyr in the Diocletian persecution (about 311), and also the parent of an Antiochene school of teachers, some of whom it is fair to call rationalists. Arius' theory of the person of our Lord was a complex one,[1] but it is mainly with one startling feature in it that the Church concerned itself. He affirmed that Christ was indeed the incarnation of a pre-existent being, the Word or Son, who was "divine" in a popular sense and could be called God and worshipped, but who was not really of the nature of God the Creator. He was a creature who had a beginning from the divine will, and was the created medium through whom God made other creatures. Arius, like the rest of the Church, held fast to the old doctrine of God the Creator derived from the prophets of Israel. He was not a pantheist. He recognized that there can be no confusion between the Creator and the creature. Christ in His original nature must be either one or the other. He must come from one side or other of the line which separates the creative nature from the created. And he quite definitely put Christ on the side of the creatures. He was not of the nature of God, but He came into existence by His will. Thus to account for His exalted and quasi-divine character and position, he would have had the Church regard Him as something like a demigod or created God in His first being, and as a divinized hero in the human guise which he afterwards assumed. He seems to have been a thorough intellectualist in love with his own theory, and to have thrown himself zealously and successfully into the task of propagating it. Doubtless he saw in it a bridge by which the non-Christian intellectual world could be persuaded to accept Christ and worship Christ without abandoning its own familiar categories.

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[1] It is carefully described by Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma* (Eng. trans.), vol. iv, cap. i, and by Robertson in his admirable Introduction to the translation of Athanasius in *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers* (Parkers, Oxford, 1892).

This is what the Church saw from another point of view—that Arianism was a bold attempt to assimilate within the Christian Church the pagan idea of a demigod. Arius' first opponent was his bishop, Alexander; and it was the commotion stirred by Alexander's resistance to Arius which alarmed the Emperor Constantine—persuaded that this was merely a question of words, and anxious above all things to promote the peace of the Church in which he had recently learned to see the hope of the empire. This led him to try the expedient of summoning a General Council, which should represent the bishops of all the Christian churches of the empire, to settle the matter. The Council met in 325 in Nicaea and condemned Arius almost unanimously, and, as an expedient to make the condemnation effective, modified an existing baptismal creed, especially by introducing into it the word *Homoousios*, "of one substance with the Father"; which henceforth became the test word of orthodoxy, being selected, we observe, because of its *exclusive* power, because though Arians would accept a word which sounded very like it—*Homoiousios* (of like substance with the Father)—they simply could not say that Father and Son were of the *same* substance or reality.

This choice of a word—and that a word not found in Scripture—to exclude from the Christian Church a group of men believed to be in error, but in a highly metaphysical region, when the word which they were prepared to accept differed from the word selected only in a single letter, is a proceeding naturally repulsive to moderate men at all times, and especially to the modern Englishman. Nevertheless, we must confess that it was necessary. To tolerate the Arians was to tolerate both the pagan conception of a created God or demigod, and also the conception of a deified hero: that is to say, the Church, in tolerating them, would have turned its back on the foundation of its religion—its belief inherited from the prophets of Israel that there was only one God, and there could be none other than He, and that none but He might be adored as God. It is only to say the same thing in other words to say that, if the Christian Church had not been in fundamental error for nearly three hundred years in worshipping Jesus the Christ as its Lord and calling Him God, that must be because He came originally from the other side of that unfathomable gulf which divides the self-existent God the Creator from all His creatures, even the highest—because He belongs to the only eternal reality, the being of God. The long-persecuted Church was just being called to assume the rôle of the established religion of the empire. It was about to enter upon the tremendous charge of guiding the half-converted tribes who were beginning to pour over it and were destined so soon to overwhelm it. It is very easy to see that if it had consented, however reluctantly, to tolerate what Arianism asked it to tolerate, polytheism, both philosophical and popular, both civilized and barbarous, would have effected its lodgment securely within the Church. The Church did not, in fact, keep its doctrine wholly free from deleterious matter derived from paganism. Far from it. But if it had done what the Arians asked of it, its belief in one only God, one only object of worship, would have been submerged in the flood of pagan polytheism.

I will venture to quote once more the remarkable acknowledgment on the part of Thomas Carlyle which Froude relates[1]: "He made one remark which is worth recording. In earlier years he had spoken contemptuously of the Athanasian controversy—of the Christian world torn in pieces over a diphthong; and he would ring the changes in broad Annandale on the *Homoousion* and the *Homoiousion*. He now told me that he perceived Christianity itself to have been at stake. If the Arians had won, it would have dwindled away to a legend."

The speedily won decision of the Council of Nicaea proved to be a surprise rather than a victory. Owing to a variety of political and other causes, for more than fifty years of bewildering controversy, the fate of its momentous decision hung in the balance. So far as the controversy was really theological at all, it was a struggle of religious faith holding on to a tradition and a revelation, against an ingenious intellectual theory, supported by a closely knit *coterie* of scholars of the school of Lucian, and aided by a mass of mere conservatism which was only reluctant to accept the new word *Homoousion*. Athanasius, who was the champion of orthodoxy from the time of the Council, when he was still a deacon, till the day of his death, makes the real nature of the struggle constantly evident. In his first writings, when he was a very young man, he had shown himself fascinated by the current philosophy of the *Logos*—the divinity immanent in the world—and had interpreted the Incarnation in the light of it.[2] But through all the long years of conflict his philosophical interests are almost wholly swallowed up in his passionate but also deliberate and rational zeal for Christianity as a religion resting on a person who can be wholly believed in and worshipped as the Redeemer because He is really God as well as man[1] —a religion, moreover, which is essentially the same religion as had its beginnings in the Old Testament, the religion of the one God, who is not less truly one because He has come nearer to us in His incarnate Son, and we have recognized a distinction as of persons in the one divine being. Athanasius argues elaborately and persistently, but never as a philosopher contending for his theory, always as one put in charge of a revelation and a tradition, always with his eye fixed upon the strictly religious interests and loyalties. It is a great mistake to speak as if

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[1] Carlyle's *Life in London*, ii 462. See also the similar judgment in Harnack, *Hist. of Dogma*, iv 43: "Had the Arian doctrine gained the victory, it would in all probability have completely ruined Christianity," etc.

[2] Dr. Rashdall, in *Jesus Human and Divine* (Melrose, 1922), p. 14, reproduces an earlier paper in which, with astonishing emphasis, he accused Athanasius (like Irenaeus, see above, p. 497) of being Apollinarian: "It cannot be too strongly asserted that Athanasius was an Apollinarian." In a note to the republished paper, in consequence of protests, he modifies his statement thus: "In his

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earlier days." What should we think of an historian of to-day who should speak of Mr. Gladstone in retrospect as "a strenuous Tory," or of a distinguished bishop, still alive, as "a pugnacious High Churchman," and then explain that he was referring to his hot youth ? Dr. Rashdall then says that in the *Orations* there is "no trace of any distinct recognition of a human soul in Jesus," and that his later distinct repudiations of Apollinarianism were "formal" and "that it may be doubted how far this admission really affected his general way of thinking."

The truth behind all this is that the circumstances of current controversy and the tone of the Alexandrian atmosphere both alike tended towards a one-sided emphasis on the Godhead of Christ, as compared with the manhood. But Athanasius was on his guard. I have quoted in my *Dissertations*, pp. 122–6, many passages from the *Orations* dealing with our Lord's assertion that He *did not know* (Mark xiii 32) and similar texts. Athanasius' explanation of the texts may be regarded as more or as less satisfactory. But, at any rate, they make it quite evident that he recognized in our Lord's manhood, or "flesh," a human mind which must be in itself limited and susceptible of progress and liable to ignorance. This is plain through the whole course of his controversial life, as well as in his later utterances when Apollinarianism was specifically in question. No doubt Athanasius was always reluctant to give up old friends on account of their excesses, whether Apollinarius or Marcellus. But he was himself precisely *not* Apollinarian.

[1] Harnack and Robertson give us excellent accounts of Athanasius' doctrine, and Dr. Bright (*Church of the Fathers*) is incomparable in his vivid estimate of Athanasius as a person.

the outlook of the Church in the matter was mainly philosophical. All that the Church did was to choose the best available term to express the truth that Christ was God, and that there could not be any being conceived of or worshipped as God except the one God without abandoning the foundation of the revelation on which the Church rested. Certainly Athanasius against Arius stands for permanent and practical religion against an intellectual theory which in fact turned out to be a very transitory phase of philosophy indeed.

III

But before the death of Athanasius the balance of interest had shifted from one aspect of the person of the Redeemer to the other—from His Godhead to His manhood. A hundred years earlier Origen had prefaced his most speculative book—on *The Principles of Things*—by pointing out that there was a Christian tradition which it was the first business of the Church to hand down, and that (among other necessary points) it proclaimed a Christ who was both eternally and permanently God and also, by His incarnation, really man. In the traditional religion of the mass of the Christian people it was in ancient days always rather the belief in His manhood that was in peril than that in His Godhead. But the Church's duty was always to be true to the double idea or double fact and, in spite of one-sided tendencies, it fulfilled this duty. This is illustrated by the history of the Councils. One of the most zealous of the Athanasians and one of the ablest, Apollinarius of Laodicea, in his zeal to maintain the moral perfection and immutability of Christ, embraced the notion that in Christ the divine reason and will took the place of the changeable human will and fallible human reason. So that the manhood of Christ which He took at the Incarnation was not a full and complete manhood, but a manifestation of the divine reason veiling itself and expressing itself in a human flesh and animal soul, or principle of life.[1] This idea, which ought indeed to startle anyone who has read the Gospels, including the account of the temptation and of the agony in Gethsemane, Apollinarius made more plausible apparently by the idea that in the divine Word lies the eternal archetype of all created things,[2] and in particular of human nature, which was made in the image of God—so that the eternal Word can even be spoken of as the archetypal or eternal man, and we may suppose that He was always destined to act as man in a human body. But there is a good deal of uncertainty about the date and the nature of this refinement.

It must be confessed that zeal for the full meaning of the manhood of Christ was not a very conspicuous characteristic of Greek theologians. Nevertheless, when thus challenged by Apollinarius the Church was true to itself. The Council of Constantinople—the history of which is very obscure in many respects—certainly followed the lead of an earlier Council at Alexandria and condemned the Apollinarians, but without any special definition. When the Council was later reckoned for ecumenical, this[3] was what it was chiefly credited with—that it had affirmed that the Church must proclaim a Christ who was not only truly God but also perfectly and completely man, with all the complement of properly human faculties, spiritual as well as physical. Once again the Church had behaved, not as a group of philosophers or psychologists seeking to frame a satisfying theory of Christ's person, but as the trustees for a religion rooted in historical facts, bound to the full reality of Christ the man.

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[1] He adopted the psychological theory which would describe man as made up of body, soul, and spirit.

[2] The Fathers mostly read John i 3, 4 as "Without him [the Word] was not anything made. That which hath been made was [eternally] life in him."

[3] As also that it gave completed expression to the doctrine of the Trinity by bringing the Holy Spirit as well as the Son under the term *Homoousios*.

To-day it is not necessary to argue the case against Apollinarius. All our modern Lives of Christ, and books about Christ, give the fullest interpretation to His manhood and call attention to the overwhelming evidence which the Gospels give us of the human spirit—reason and will and feeling—in Jesus. Present-day enthusiasm is all for the full manhood. The question with us is only whether this reality of His manhood is consistent with personal Godhead. In ancient days, however, Apollinarius and His followers found much more popular sympathy than those who were accused of denying the personal Godhead of Christ.

IV

Then once more the balance shifts. There was a school of theologians, already alluded to, who had their centre at Antioch and did honour to Lucian as their master, amongst whom the most famous names were those of Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. They were scholars with whom modern Englishmen would have natural sympathy. Their zeal was for a critical and historical interpretation of the sacred books, and for the reality of the manhood of Christ. In strenuous opposition to the tendencies of Alexandria, and especially of Apollinarius, they emphasized the freedom of Christ's human will and the reality of His human growth and human limitations in mind as well as body, even to the point of postulating for Him, as it seemed, an independent human personality, at any rate to start with. The " connection " between the divine

Word or Son and the human person of Jesus, the adopted Son, was, in their estimation, so close as to involve actual identification of the man Jesus with the Son of God. But this was apparently a gradual process and was the reward of a continually fuller moral perfection. Fundamentally and originally the man Jesus was a separate person from the eternal Son.

One of the disciples of this school, Nestorius, a fiery and pugnacious character, became Bishop of Constantinople in A.D. 428. His "chaplain," Anastasius, took an early opportunity vehemently to repudiate the term *theotokos* which it was customary to apply to the Blessed Virgin Mary, signifying precisely that her infant Son was personally God. "Let no one," he cried, "call Mary Theotokos; for Mary was but a woman; and it is impossible that God should be born of a woman." Nestorius threw himself into the defence of the Antiochene doctrine in special antagonism to the influences from Alexandria, where the great Cyril was archbishop. In particular, he was said to have committed himself to the assertion that "the child of two or three months old I cannot call God." At once a tumult arose in the Church, and controversy was fierce. Few things in the history of the Church have probably harmed it more than the bitterness and uncharitableness of its controversialists. Nestorius was bitter. But what has mostly harmed the Church was the bitterness of its protagonist Cyril. And there is no question that the theology he poured forth was distinctly one-sided and ill calculated to satisfy the reasonable scruples of the Antiochenes. But with these matters we are not here concerned. Nor are we really concerned with the question whether, after all, Nestorius ultimately meant to deny what the Church was at pains to affirm. There is now ground for believing that, had he lived a few years longer, he might have been satisfied to accept the decision of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, in which he could have recognized the safeguarding of what he valued.[1]

But the obscurity of many of the details of the controversy, and the painfully uncharitable tone of it, which leaves a most disagreeable impression on our minds, cannot be allowed to obscure the real importance of the issue. The Creed of Nicaea affirmed that it was the eternal Son of God, Himself very God, who for us men and for our salvation had come down and taken flesh of Mary and been born and suffered for us. And long before Nicaea that was the passionate faith of the Church. It was really God, the eternal Son, who was born of Mary, and who lived and died under conditions of a real humanity. And this continuity of personality was the very thing which Nestorius seemed to deny. Thus once more a Council, reckoned as ecumenical, was held at Ephesus in 431, and Nestorius was violently condemned and the title *Theotokos*, as applied to the mother of Jesus—that is, strictly, "the bearer of God"—was made obligatory for acceptance by the officers and teachers of the Church. And I do not think it can be doubted that here again the Church, in refusing to admit that Jesus was a separate person from the Son of God, and affirming, on the contrary, that it was the same person—the Word or Son—who was eternally in the being of God and through whom all things were made, who was born as a baby of Mary and lived and died upon the Cross—in affirming this and denying its contrary the Church was certainly only reaffirming the doctrine of St. Paul and St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

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[1] On the subtle and difficult question what Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorius actually and precisely meant to affirm and deny. I would refer to the very just summary, as it seems to me, given by Dr. Kidd in his just published *History of the Church*, vol. iii, chaps. xi and xii.

The spiritual importance of the question at issue may be made more apparent by four considerations.

(1) The sum and substance of Christian redemption lies in the real union of Christians with Jesus, the man who lived and worked and suffered on earth and now reigns in heaven. And the point is that in being made one with Him—baptized into Him and receiving into ourselves His very life, His flesh and blood—we are really made one, not with any created or intermediate person, but with God Himself. And it is only because He is verily and personally God that His manhood can have ascribed to it this capacity for universal participation and assimilation. St. Cyril is always recurring to this point.

(2) Christians from the beginning, and notably St. Paul, have insisted upon the pre-eminence and uniqueness of the self-sacrifice of Christ. Now, judged by an objective standard, the measure of Christ's self-sacrifice within the limits of His mortal life cannot be said to be greater, at any rate, than that of multitudes of martyrs. But it is not within these limits that the uniqueness of Christ's self-sacrifice is found. It lies in the region of His pre-existent life. It consists in this, that one who existed in the nature of God consented to abandon this to us inconceivable glory of life, in order to accept the conditions and limitations and sufferings of real manhood. This act of self-sacrifice is strictly unique, and it is so only because the person who sacrifices Himself is very God—not closely united to God but personally God. His acts are strictly God's acts and His love God's love.

(3) Herein lies also the clue to the *finality* of the Christ. Intellectually considered, nothing is more essential to a full faith in Christ than this recognition of His essential finality—to which we shall have to recur later on. This means that He is not only the

greatest prophet and the most conspicuous saint and the noblest leader of humanity who has ever lived; for if that were all, obviously we could "look for another" as great as He, possibly greater than He. And if Jesus be, as at the last analysis Nestorianism always asserts, a human person, one among millions of human persons, whom the divine Word united to Himself and even (finally) absorbed into Himself, there is no reason in the nature of things why the process should not be repeated. It is, in fact, only the highest example of what occurs in its measure in every good man. There may be another Christ, even conceivably a higher and more enlightened one. There is no real ground for asserting the finality of the Christ, unless He be personally God in manhood. Then, and then only, must He be essentially and necessarily final. For there can be no disclosure of God in manhood or of manhood in God even conceivable which should be completer or fuller (at least under the conditions of this world) than is given us in Him who is the Word made flesh. Nor in the nature of things can there be another such. There can be no other such person as the only-begotten Son of God.

(4) This, too, is important—the "Nestorian" conception is exceedingly difficult to grasp with precision. It is deeply evasive intellectually considered, and appears to pass from one form to another. But the Creed of the Church is a creed for common men, and must be able to express itself, in those points for which it claims popular acceptance, in broad affirmations—broad as well as true. The orthodox creed—that for us men and for our salvation very God, the Son of God, consented to come down from the bosom of the Father to become man and for us to die—has this broad intelligibility.

But freed from refinements and reduced to a like broad intelligibility, it is impossible to doubt that the teaching of Nestorius would have inevitably taken shape in the proclamation of Jesus as the deified man,[1] which from every point of view would have been a disaster.

V

Once more, and for the last time, the balance shifts. It is now an old Constantinopolitan monk called Eutyches, who affirmed that though Godhead and manhood were separate before the Incarnation, yet in Jesus the manhood was in some sense absorbed and swallowed up in the Godhead. There was a widespread tendency towards this sort of "monophysitism"—this doctrine of the absorption of the manhood in the Godhead—and the Eastern Church might easily have overbalanced on that side. But the West, in the person of the great Leo, Bishop of Rome, put its weight on the other side, and at Chalcedon, in 451, the last of the great definitions was made which affirmed that the manhood remained in Christ, not only complete, but permanently unconfused—that as Christ was consubstantial with God according to His Godhead, so He became and remained consubstantial with us according to His manhood. So the doctrine was fixed that in Christ incarnate there is one person and that divine, but two natures, divine and human, the one original and the other voluntarily assumed by incarnation but permanent and distinct. This—the Chalcedonian—may be considered in principle the final definition of the Church. If a century later the Church had occasion to affirm that in Christ was the reality of a human *will*, and the whole rational activity of manhood, that was only a reaffirmation—

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[1] If Nestorianism among Syrians and Assyrians has not taken any such shape it is, I think, because their so-called Nestorianism is really not Nestorianism at all, but in part simply a difficulty of language and in part loyalty to a persecuted leader.

important enough in itself—of what was really secured in principle by the definitions which excluded Apollinarianism and Eutychianism.

VI

We need pursue the history of ecclesiastical dogma no further. In this volume we are in no way concerned with any question of the *authority* which these decrees have as dogmas of the Church. The whole idea of Church *authority* will be ignored till we reach the subject of the Church in the next volume. At present we are simply taking these decrees as important facts in the historical development of the doctrine of the person of Christ. And we cannot fail to be conscious that they have at different periods, and especially to-day, been the subject of widespread criticism in intellectual circles, often violently and contemptuously expressed, especially at their culminating point in the formula of Chalcedon which demands our acceptance of the conception of Christ as throughout, from eternity to eternity, one and the same divine *person*, who nevertheless, as incarnate and made man, subsists in two distinct *natures*, divine and human. Now, (1) the " nature " includes the will and the consciousness ; and we are here (the critics tell us) postulating in the human Christ two wills and consciousnesses, lying (so to speak) side by side in the same person—a very impossible conception—whereas in the Gospels what we are witnesses of is one person, Jesus the Christ, with one will and consciousness, the consciousness and will of a Son, in presence of another will and consciousness, that of His Father who is in heaven ; and there is no suggestion of a dualism of wills or consciousnesses in His own person.

(2) The identity of the divine personality throughout seems to involve the idea of Christ's manhood

as "impersonal." So the theologians have constantly called it. But it is a wholly unacceptable idea. It is precisely in Jesus, "the Son of Man," that we seem to see all the characteristics of human personality at their highest.

Now it must be acknowledged that these are very important criticisms which, as we hear them, strike home with a powerful sense of truth. And there is another of a different kind which urges that the Councils were in their definitions, by the use of such words as "substance," "person," "nature," tying the Christian religion to a temporary phase of philosophy which is past and gone, and from which it had better now shake itself free.

I would seek to give these criticisms, what they clearly deserve, the most candid consideration, which shall be quite free, that is, shall at present quite ignore the questions of the ecclesiastical authority claimed for these decisions.

1. The only true and historical way of regarding these dogmatic decisions is to regard them as primarily *negative*. Their motive was not any positively felt need of interpreting or defining the faith as a thing good in itself, but simply the pressing necessity for excluding certain very powerfully supported intellectual theories which were at work and which were calculated to undermine the traditions of faith, worship and practice which the Church was set to maintain—what it called "the tradition." It must be admitted that the love of intellectual definition for its own sake took possession to a dangerous extent of the Church both in East and West. But these "intellectual exercises" have not crystallized as disciplinary decrees. It is important to notice that Athanasius, and the Fathers generally, take a very restricted view of the legitimate functions of the Church with

regard to Christian doctrine. Athanasius contrasts it with its functions in respect of discipline. In this latter region it claims to issue directions on its own authority. Thus the Council of Nicaea with regard to the Easter festival said simply that "it seemed good (ἔδοξε)" to the bishops to give such and such directions. But with regard to doctrine it is much more modest. "With reference to the faith they wrote—not 'such and such things were determined,' but 'thus the Catholic Church believes.' And they added immediately the statement of their faith, to show that their judgment was not new but apostolic, and that what they wrote was not any discovery of theirs, but was what the apostles taught."[1] And, as a matter of fact, St. Athanasius in his almost endless argumentations hardly ever refers to the decision of the Council, but prefers to conduct all his argument in the region of scripture and the necessities of practical religion and reason. And in this he is not singular. It is so with almost all the Fathers. A dogmatic decision was for them certainly a regrettable necessity, only justifiable under extreme need.

2. But I think that, for reasons already given, we are bound to admit that in the case of each of the four great councils the decision at which it arrived to exclude certain lines of teaching or proposed explanations of the person of Christ was a necessary decision—really necessary if the faith of the New Testament was to be maintained. As I have said, to admit as tolerable the Arian explanation of Christ as in effect a demi-god, and thus to repudiate the whole basis of strict monotheism, which inspires both Old and New Testaments, would have ruined Christianity, by assimilating it to insurgent Paganism. It was just as necessary, if the faith of St. Paul and St. John was to be maintained,

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[1] *De Synodis*, c. 5.

decisively to exclude any teaching which fundamentally distinguished the person of Jesus from the person of the Son of God, and thereby converted "incarnation" into "indwelling," and substantially assimilated Christ to prophets and saints. In the other direction it was certainly as necessary to exclude the ideas which would have rendered Christ's manhood fundamentally unreal, especially in respect of just those regions of mind and will and spirit in which man is distinctively man. It was, in fact, in view of the ecclesiastical tendencies of the day, a miracle of grace that the Church took so firm a stand against Apollinarius and the Monophysites, though it is precisely this that involved it in the postulate of the two natures to which we shall return directly. I see no reason to doubt that if St. Paul and St. John could have had the situation explained to them, they would have accepted the necessity for the definitions.

3. Though, as I have said, we constantly read highly critical and even contemptuous estimates of the terminology of the Councils, I do not see that they could have found at the time better words in which to embody their decisions, nor have I ever seen any better modern terms suggested. In fact the critics do not generally suggest that the work was badly done for its time, but they suggest that the Councils used (as they were bound to use) the philosophical categories and terms of their day, and that these categories and terms have been outgrown.

But it is very necessary to protest that the Church was not professing to act philosophically. It chose the term "of one substance" to exclude the idea that Christ was not *really* God and then to exclude the idea that He was not *really* man. As the Church used the term it was acting with practical statesmanship and discrimination, rather than with philosophical accuracy: for it is plain that "unity of substance" is used in rather different senses when it is applied to describe (1) the relation of Christ to the Father and (2) His relation to His fellow men. Its aim was practical. So again it was practical necessity which led to its doing the world a great service—that is, selecting an old word which hitherto had meant no more than "substance" (i.e. *hypostasis*) and stamping it with the distinctive meaning of "person," an idea for which hitherto Greek and Latin philosophy had had no term. Once more, if it was, as I think it was, essential that the Church should maintain that the Creator and His creatures —God and man—belong to kinds of reality which are essentially different, I do not see that it could have chosen a better word to use than "nature," when it affirmed in Christ's one person two "natures," the one original and the other acquired. I do not see then how the way in which the Church did its defensive or self-protective work, so far as the choice of its terminology is concerned, could have been bettered. Nor do I see how the terminology in question could be bettered to-day, so long as it is granted that the idea to be expressed is that of the incarnation in a real and full manhood of one who belonged to the eternal being of God, as a Son with His Father. On the contrary it has always appeared to me fairly evident that what the critics want is not better terms to express the same idea, but the substitution of a different idea —either the substitution of what is fundamentally the pantheistic conception of God, according to which God and man are parts of the one substance, in place of the essentially different Biblical idea of God the Creator distinct from His creatures, or the substitution of the idea of a God-indwelt man for that of the incarnate God.

Of course, I know that there is a philosophy which deprecates the whole idea of the existence of real objects or things having distinctive qualities or natures, created by God and in a measure really knowable by us, and of persons made in the image of God, and therefore having a different nature from mere things and animals, and of God as the only self-subsistent and self-complete being, the Creator of all that is. What this philosophy suggests to us as the ultimate reality is (to use Lord Balfour's language) "an identity wherein all differences vanish, or a unity which includes, but does not transcend, the differences which it somehow holds in solution." But this sort of philosophy is not the only Idealism. And it has to reckon with the sort of Realism which the common sense of mankind as well as the theology of the Bible postulates. And granted the sort of Realism which believes in real created objects having distinctive natures, and in real persons, and in a real God the Creator, I do not think the terminology of the councils can be bettered.

4. But the best things can be most lamentably abused; and it is manifest in history that the Greek genius, which exercised itself rightfully within the Christian Church in defining and protecting the fundamental faith of Christendom, became enamoured of its own intellectualism and to a perilous extent distorted the true character and estimate of the Christian religion. For the Christian religion is a way of life—"the way" was the first name for the Church. This "way" involves and depends upon a certain self-disclosure of God and certain ideas about the destiny and capacity of man and his sin and need of redemption. Thus it requires a Creed, and it is idle to regret the necessity. It must perforce have formulated and defended the intellectual principles on which its way of life depends. But it ought always to have presented itself to mankind first of all as a way of life. While in fact, under the dominant influence of Greek

intellectualism, the interest in the intellectual propositions and formulas became the foremost interest, and the Church presented itself to the world, not as a society called to live a life, but as a society maintaining a very elaborate system of doctrines, the propagation of which was its chief business. This is the impression we get in history of the later Greek Church, though the impression made by its mystics and saints must not be forgotten. And a similar intellectualism may be charged against the Western schoolmen, even though Erasmus and his friends did not by any means judge them fairly.

Under such conditions the misuse made of the definitions of the Church is of this kind. They ought to have been regarded as simply warning men off certain misleading and one-sided lines of logical development, leaving them to get their positive picture of Christ from the Gospels, and their positive theory from the books of the New Testament. That, as we have seen, was the real intention of Athanasius and others of the Fathers. They talk very little about the definitions. All their argument—good and bad—is upon the ground of Scripture and occasionally of tradition, and of the meaning of the sacraments and the requirements of the spiritual life. But another tendency is also apparent and in effect prevails. The dogmatic decisions become premises to argue from, and Christ is represented not as He was, but as, it was thought, He must have been. Thus, because it is laid down that there are to be recognized in Christ the two distinct natures, divine and human, what it is not unfair to call a fancy picture of Christ is drawn, as acting now in one nature and now in another, now as God and now as man, which does not really correspond to the picture in the Gospel. Again, it comes to be argued that because He was God, therefore He *must have been* continuously omniscient, and such a plain statement as "Of that day and that hour knoweth no one, no, not the Son," is explained away to mean that He did not choose to reveal what He really knew. "The truth," as Theodoret grimly observed, "tells a lie." Later all that belongs to human limitations—mental growth, anxiety, faith, hope, even prayer in the real sense—is excluded from His consciousness as inconsistent with His Godhead. The intellectual dogmas, instead of serving their original and legitimate purpose, have become the premises from which conclusions are drawn as to what the Incarnate must have been, which practically obscure the picture in the Gospels. So we feel it to be with the later scholastic theologians. The reality of our Lord's humanity, so far as the life of His soul was concerned, becomes almost obliterated.[1]

Or again, because the dogmatic decision against Nestorius laid it down that there was one continuous personality and that divine, the phrase becomes current that the humanity of Christ was "impersonal,"[2] whereas in the Gospels we feel that we have a picture of the Son of Man intensely individual and unmistakably personal in His manhood.

5. But the abuse of a thing does not prove that it has no use. The definitions of the Councils were no doubt misused, but we have seen reason to believe that they were necessary, and that the lines of thought which they were intended to exclude were really destructive of the foundations of the Christian faith. The best way to test their legitimacy is to inquire whether, accepting them as limits to our thinking, we are able to accept at its full value and fairly interpret the picture which the Gospels present to us of the Son of Man. As we have seen, it is not the picture of a mere man with a merely human consciousness or a merely prophetic claim. It cannot

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[1] See on all this my *Dissertations*, pp. 154 ff.

[2] I quite recognize the truth which the phrase is meant to convey (see below, p. 523). It is not used in the formula of Chalcedon.

be so interpreted in any one of the Gospels. Only the incarnation doctrine of St. Paul and St. John can really interpret it. On the other hand, the divine person in the Gospels is certainly presented to us as growing in wisdom, as being tempted, as asking questions, apparently for information, as praying, as overwhelmed with anxiety, as asking upon the Cross the great question of the perplexed and dismayed all the world over, and finally, as, at least in one respect, asserting His ignorance. And, negatively, He never shows any sign of transcending the knowledge of natural things possible to His age, country, and condition. How can these facts be reconciled with His personal Godhead?

I see no help in solving this question so great as is supplied by two phrases in which St. Paul characterizes the act of the Son of God in taking our manhood[1]—"he beggared himself" (or "made himself poor"), and "he emptied himself" or "annulled himself." St. Paul, in using these words, is not thinking of any particular aspect of the human life of Jesus, such as the limitation of His knowledge; but he regards the Incarnation in itself as having involved in some sense the abandonment of "riches" which belonged to the previous divine state of the Son. It is when we look at the facts in the Gospel that we are led to welcome St. Paul's words as giving us the clue to what we see there. The divine Son in becoming man must, we conclude, have accepted, voluntarily and deliberately, the limitations involved in really living as man—even as sinless and perfect man—in feeling as a man, thinking as a man, striving as a man, being anxious and tried as a man. Jesus does not indeed appear in the Gospels as unconscious of His divine nature. He knows He is Son of the Father. He "remembers" how He came from God and would go back to God. But He appears none the less as accepting the limitations of manhood. And St. Paul, I say, gives us the hint which directs our vision. This was no failure of power. God is love, and love is sympathy and self-sacrifice. The Incarnation is the supreme act of self-sacrificing sympathy, by which one whose nature is divine was enabled to enter into human experience. He emptied Himself of divine prerogatives so far as was involved in really becoming man, and growing, feeling, thinking and suffering as man.

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[1] 2 Cor. viii 9, Phil. ii 7.

No doubt such a conception raises questions to which we can find no full answer. Thus—Is the self-emptying to be conceived of as a continual refusal to exercise the free divine consciousness which He possessed, or as something once for all involved in the original act by which He entered into the limiting conditions of manhood? And I think if we are wise we shall not attempt to answer the question. We have not the knowledge of the inner life of Jesus which would make an answer possible. Or again, we are asked how we relate this "limited" condition of the Son as incarnate with His exercise of all the cosmic functions of the eternal Word—what the New Testament calls "the sustaining" or "bearing along of all things" or the holding all the universe of things together—and again I think we had better give no answer. All that appears evident is that it was the eternal Son who was manifested in human nature as Jesus of Nazareth, and that *within the sphere and limit of His mortal life* He appears as restricted by human conditions; and we thankfully accept this supreme example of humility and self-sacrifice, without attempting to relate it to what lies outside our possibilities of knowledge.[1] We do well to be agnostics, if we put our agnosticism in the right place.

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[1] I have endeavoured to enter at greater length into this question in *Dissertations*, ii, where I have also given full quotations from the Fathers.

Now the recognition that the Incarnation involved this limitation in the exercise of divine faculties, *within its sphere*, is quite consistent with the terms of the ecclesiastical definitions. We are bound to recognize the nature of God and the nature of Man as both belonging throughout to the person of the Christ, and as in their essence distinct. Only that power of self-limitation and self-adaptation in God which we have already recognized as in a measure involved in creation, and especially in the creation of free spirits,[1] we should here, in Jesus Christ, recognize again as brought to bear with a fresh intensity to make the Incarnation really possible, spiritually as well as physically. Just as we believe that now in the heavenly places Christ is still truly man, but that the manhood is all radiant with Godhead: so in His earthly state we should believe that Christ was really God and so knew Himself, but that Godhead was submitting itself to the limitations of manhood. As St. Cyril puts it: "He suffered the limits of humanity to prevail in His case."[2]

But we must surely repudiate that mode of speech which prevailed at the time of Chalcedon and later, whereby the life of Christ on earth was represented as containing two consciousnesses and two wills, so to speak, juxtaposited in distinction the one from the other, so that He thought and spoke and acted now as God and now as man. We should repudiate this, because we feel that the Gospels present us with one who is, and knows Himself to be, always and in all things the Son of God, but who is throughout existing, acting, and speaking under the conditions and limitations of manhood.

Also we should deprecate the unguarded use of a phrase which became current among theologians—we mean the phrase which describes Christ's manhood as "impersonal." All that this really means is that the manhood had no *separate* personality. There was only one person—the eternal Word—who exists eternally in God, who was active in the whole universe, and who at last was incarnate in Jesus Christ. But when He took the manhood, complete in all human faculties and activities, He became to it the centre of personality. He made it personal. Thus the humanity of Jesus in the Gospels has nothing of abstract universality about it. It is no mere veil of the Godhead. It is, indeed, intensely individual. And if man, in distinction from all other creatures, was originally made in the divine image and likeness, we can understand how the divine person can become the ego or subject of the manhood in Jesus without its thereby ceasing to be human.[1]

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[1] See *Belief in God,* pp. 115–17.

[2] *Dissert.*, p. 146.

I do not then think that the Chalcedonian formula, summarizing the decisions of the Councils, requires revision in itself; but if we would justify it, we must recognize very frankly that the purpose of the dogmas was negative—to exclude certain fundamentally misleading interpretations of the person of Christ—and we must insist that for our positive conception of the person of Jesus we need constantly to study with unembarrassed eyes the picture in the Gospels and the doctrine of the Epistles.

Note A, see p. 494

(1) "*The Shepherd*" *of Hermas.*
(2) *The* "*Didache.*"
(3) *The* "*Odes of Solomon.*"

(1) "*The Shepherd*" *of Hermas.*—Undue attention has, I think, so far as his theology is concerned, been given to this interesting prophet of the early Roman Church. He is interesting as a prophet—interesting on

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[1] See further appended note B, p. 526; also in view of Dr. H. R. Mackintosh's criticism of the Chalcedonian formula see pp. 848–63.

account of his visions, which he and others believed to be inspired, and on account of the enthusiasm which he threw into the message from God given him to deliver. His importance lies in the ethical region. He shows that the Church, or that part of the Church which accepted him as a prophet, still clearly viewed the Christian religion as "the way." Its main interest was moral. The theological background of Hermas' visions was not apparently scrutinized. If we do scrutinize it, it must be confessed that his theology is confused and confusing. He certainly believed in the incarnation of the Son of God, Who "was older than any creature," through whom all things were made and in whom they are sustained. He is thus certainly no Ebionite or humanitarian in his estimate of Christ. But he is very confusing in the language he uses about the Holy Spirit and holy spirits, and about the relation of the Son and the Spirit, whom he sometimes seems to identify, and he may be accused of "Apollinarian" language about the flesh of Christ. I think the best account of him is still Dorner's. But the fact is he was no theologian, and his careless language is such as must almost inevitably have occurred before the days when doctrine was formulated.

(2) *The teaching of the Twelve Apostles* still appears to me to be a very early and very Judaic document which must represent some group of Christian communities quite outside the main streams of Christian influence, who must, moreover, have lost contact with the main streams early, and remained uninfluenced by the ideas of St. Paul and St. John. Its ethical teaching is not like that of St. James. It barely deserves to be called Christian. The document does not supply any clear indication of a doctrine of Christ's person. But it includes the direction to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," which implies the doctrine of the Son as a divine person.

(3) *The "Odes of Solomon."*—The beautiful mysticism of these odes, which Dr. Rendel Harris discovered and published some fourteen years ago (Cambridge Press), implies (see especially Ode 41) a quasi-Johannine doctrine of Christ (see p. 76).

(4) As has been already remarked, *the Ebionites, i.e.* that obscure section of Judaistic Christians who definitely rejected the doctrine of Christ as a divine person incarnate, represent a later deterioration. They cannot be quoted as if they represented the belief of St. James: see Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, p. 200; and B. J. Kidd, *History of the Christian Church* (Oxford, 1922), i, pp. 85–103.

Note B, see p. 524

The Term "Enhypostasia"

We should be very grateful to Dr. H. M. Relton for his most suggestive and excellent *Study in Christology*, and to Dr. Headlam for his preface to that study. Dr. Relton has done good service in seeking to familiarize us with the term *enhypostasia*, to which Leontius of Byzantium sought to give currency, to express the idea that the manhood of Jesus found its personality in the personality of the Son of God. Leontius holds a very important place in the sixth century as resisting the current tendency to monophysitism, even inside the orthodox church. I have tried to bring this out in *Dissertations*, iii (see quotation, p. 277, and references in index under the heading *Leontius*). May I venture, however, to deprecate the attempt of Dr. Relton to revive the idea of Apollinarius that we are to ascribe an eternal humanity to the Word, before His incarnation. I suppose that there is some deep sense in which it must be true that all created things have their eternal counterpart in the Word, and humanity amongst them. But this applies to all created things. And we do well not to be "wise above that which is written." There is nothing in Scripture suggesting an eternal manhood in God—nothing at least that is not more adequately represented by the idea that man pre-eminently was made in the divine image. And this is enough to explain how God could take our manhood.

CHAPTER VIII

THE IMPLIED DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY

I

It has already become apparent that the Christian faith in Jesus as the Son of God or Word of God incarnate involves a belief that the being of God is not so "simple" as the Jews, with their less intimate knowledge of God, had supposed. He is still the "one Lord and His name one"; but this unity is found to contain a distinction within itself—first of all the distinction of Father and Son, which had not been made evident at first.[1] God had, so to speak, come nearer to men in Jesus Christ, to redeem them, and more of His inner being had shown itself to the discerning minds of men in the process. It is very important to take note that belief in the Holy Trinity was not the result of any philosophical or speculative movement among the Christians.

There have been in the world speculative philosophies which have arrived at some sort of Trinitarian belief. Thus we read of an Indian Trinity—Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva—and of a Trinity in the later Greek (Neo-Platonist) philosophy—The One,

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[1] Whatever anticipations of Trinitarian doctrine have been discovered by Christian theologians in the Old Testament were certainly not apparent to the Jews. I have already had occasion to speak of the development in later Jewish thought of the "wisdom" or "word" of God, as alive and operative in nature, in terms almost suggestive of distinct personality. But this suggestion never became explicit among them.

Reason, and Soul. The former of these doctrines of Trinity was an intellectual attempt to construct a bridge between the Absolute One and the many gods of popular belief, and also an attempt to harmonize hostile cults[1]; and the latter was the result of a purely philosophical attempt to analyse existence into its elements. But the Christians, without any philosophical intention at all, and without any speculative interest, found themselves believing in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as a result of their experiences as the disciples of Jesus. The name of God had become for them "the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." As a consequence of the way in which they came so to believe, it follows that the doctrine at first presented no intellectual difficulty to their minds: for in fact mankind experiences no intellectual difficulty in believing anything which comes to it as experienced fact, though the intellectual analysis of it may prove it to be as mysterious as possible, and the explanation of it wholly baffling. So it appears to be at present with the ultimate elements with which physics deals, and indeed generally with the ultimates of every science.[2] The difficulty of explanation and analysis does not carry with it any difficulty in believing that the facts are so and so. So it was at last with the Christians, when the need of explaining themselves became urgent, and their speculative interest was awakened. They found the idea of the Trinity most mysterious, and its formulation in words most difficult and always finally somewhat unsatisfactory; but, before they made any attempt to understand or to formulate, they would have said that in their experience of Jesus and His Spirit the true God had unmistakably revealed Himself to them and laid hold upon them in a novel way. So that, as I say, they found themselves believing in Father and Son and Spirit; and the subsequent difficulty they found in explaining to themselves or to others the mystery involved in their belief did not disturb their faith in the fact.

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[1] See De la Mazelière, *Evolution de Civilisation Indienne*, ii 72: "De fait la *trimurti* n'est pas la conception de trois hypostases, mais la réconciliation de trois cultes hostiles."

[2] This is what Huxley means by protesting that he was not so foolish as to reject Christianity because it is mysterious. "The mysteries of the Church are child's play compared with the mysteries of Nature. The doctrine of the Trinity is not more puzzling than the necessary antinomies of physical speculation" (see my *Bampton Lectures*, lect. ii, note 15, pp. 246–7).

How the belief came about we can easily understand. They came to believe in Jesus as being the Son of God. And reflecting on what His own words about Himself implied, and also on what was implied in His divine sovereignty as Lord of all, they recognized in Him, as we have seen, one who had come into the world from the Father and who belonged to His being, as Son with a Father. Then again they were led to expect from Jesus, the Christ, the outpouring of the Spirit of God. And a few days after He had finally left them, the Holy Spirit actually came, taking them as it were by storm, and possessing their souls with an almost intoxicating force. And the Spirit dealt with them like a person controlling them, and guiding them, in the most unmistakable ways. So we see in the Acts and Epistles how the thought of God was modified by their experiences, and the Name of God became to them the threefold Name of the Father and of the Son, or Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. It is very interesting to watch how the very complex and difficult idea of Trinity in Unity passes into their experience, and we will seek to follow the process in some detail. But the result is manifest prior to any reflection upon the intellectual problem which it presents. You see what had happened when St. Paul prays that "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit may be with you all"; or when he writes about the "same Spirit" who pours out the manifold gifts in which the Church rejoices, and the "same Lord" who presides over its manifold ministrations, or the "same God" whose presence is felt in all its various activities; or when, enumerating the grounds of Christian unity, he makes mention of the one Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father of all[1]; or when St. Peter writes to the Christians of Asia as those who feel upon them a divine election according to the predestinating choice of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience to Jesus Christ and purification through His blood[2]; or when St. Jude bids Christians to build themselves up in their most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping them selves in the love of God, welcoming the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.[3] In all these cases the name "God" is reserved for the Father. It was only slowly that the Son and the Spirit came to be freely called God, though both St. Paul[4] and St. John do so call the Lord Jesus. The reason for this reserve was, no doubt, that the instinct of monotheism was against such a use, and nothing was more important than to preserve the monotheistic standing ground of the Old Testament against the surging Paganism around. But there is no question that the gracious activities of the Son and the Spirit among men were, to their believing minds, properly activities of God. Thus, whether it be the case, as St. Matthew's Gospel relates, that our Lord actually named the Threefold Name to the disciples before His departure, or whether, as so many critics suggest, it was rather that the Palestinian editor of the first Gospel was so familiar with the formula as to attribute it to our Lord, we understand how inevitable it was that the Name of God should have come to be so named; and when, toward the end of the first century, Clement of Rome wishes to repeat the solemn affirmation of the old prophets "as the Lord liveth," we understand how natural it was that it should take the threefold form—"as God liveth, and the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, and the Holy Spirit."[1] That is what "the living God" had come to mean.

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[1] 2 Cor. xiii 13, 1 Cor. xii 4–6, Eph. iv 4–5.

[2] 1 Pet. i 2.

[3] Jude 20–21.

[4] See above, p. 382.

II

Now we must examine more in detail how the distinctions in the being of God emerge.

(1) *The three distinguishable Persons.*—That the Son of God, as He was on earth, was a person distinguishable from His Father is evident. He spoke of His own intimate fellowship with the Father as person with person. We have traced the steps by which the first disciples were led to the conviction that this fellowship of Son with Father was superhuman and belonged to God's being before the world was—that is to His eternal being.[2] We have seen no reason to doubt that St. Paul occasionally calls the Lord Jesus by the title God, and St. John evidently does so. This is the new thought of God—that the Father was never without His Son, or God never without His Image or Word—subordinate to the Father as He who receives to Him who gives, but belonging to His Being. So far the

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[1] Clem., *ad Cor.* lviii 2. I do not cite 1 John v 8—the text of the three heavenly witnesses—because, of course, it is not genuine. We may be thankful that Roman Catholic scholars are now allowed to acknowledge this.

[2] Dr. Rashdall says (*Jesus Human and Divine*, p. 50) that St. John does not call the pre-existing Word "Son," but surely he does in John i 18 (if the right reading is "God only begotten," it carries the same meaning); cf. iii 17. Also Jesus asserts that His Self—He who now speaks as man—was pre-existent (viii 58, x 36, xvi 28, xvii 5).

New Testament plainly implies a distinction of persons in the Godhead.

Again the Christ, who is the Son, was to bestow the Spirit, in whom He Himself lived. In the Synoptists our Lord very seldom is represented as speaking about the Spirit. Once He seems to speak of the Spirit, who dwells in Him and in whose power He acts, as a person who can be blasphemed, and again He promises that He shall dwell in His disciples and inspire them to speak right words.[1] But we have noticed that the intensity of the belief of the earliest Church in the Spirit would suggest that our Lord must have spoken more on this subject than the Synoptists' record contains, and certainly in the fourth Gospel there is much more. There certainly our Lord speaks of the Holy Spirit as of a distinct person, "another paraclete" or agent,[2] who is to take His own place. In these last discourses, although the Greek noun for Spirit is neuter, He is always referred to by the masculine adjective "He."[3] He is described in decidedly personal language as guide, interpreter, remembrancer, witness and judge, convicting the world.

Thus it does not surprise us to find the earliest Church in Jerusalem and in its further extension speaking of the Holy Ghost as of a person possessing the Church. To lie to the Church, as Ananias and Sapphira did, is to "tempt" the Holy Ghost and to "lie" to Him, that is to God. He is a person being "resisted" by the Jews. He gives directions, speaking in the heart of individuals, to do or not to do this or that, to go here or there. He "carries off" Philip the Evangelist. He is joined to the apostles and elders at the Council in Jerusalem in giving their decision. He directs the appointment of particular missionaries and appoints presbyter-bishops.[1] From time to time the Lord Jesus appears to Stephen and to St. Paul, or speaks to the latter,[2] but such appearances or messages appear to be thought of as quite distinguishable from the ordinary guidance given by the Spirit: that is to say, "the Spirit of Jesus" is not confused with the Lord Jesus.

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[1] Mark iii 29, xiii 11. But in the Old Testament once at least the Spirit of God is momentarily distinguished from the Father, as sending the Righteous Servant, "The Lord God hath sent me and his Spirit" (Is. xlviii 16).

[2] On the meaning of "Paraclete" see *Can We then Believe*, pp. 204 ff.

[3] John xiv 26, xv 26, xvi 8.

So in St. Paul's Epistles the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a person. He intercedes with groanings for the Church, as dwelling at its heart, and the Father recognizes His mind, because He intercedes acceptably. He bears witness within the heart of the Christian to his human spirit. He can be grieved and disappointed.[3] Constantly in St. Paul He is spoken of as "the Spirit" or "the Spirit of God" or "the Spirit of Christ," so as to be plainly distinguished from Christ, though in one passage Christ in His glorified manhood is spoken of by St. Paul as having become "quickening spirit,"[4] and once "the Lord" and "the Spirit" appear to be identified. This passage, and the various uses of "spirit" in the New Testament, are examined elsewhere in some detail.[5] But for the present I will content myself with a protest. To say, as "the critics" are so fond of doing, without more ado, that St. Paul "identifies" the glorified Christ and the Spirit, on the strength of *one* phrase,[6] while in some thirty passages he distinguishes them, is unreasonable and as far as can be from the spirit of legitimate criticism. St. Paul is not a writer who is precise in his use of terms. But he is a writer who, without such technical precision, has a remarkable power of making his meaning clear on the whole. He uses "spirit" in a great variety of senses. But on the whole he leaves no doubt in our mind that he thinks of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Church as a self-conscious and willing agent, distinguishable from the Father or God and from the glorified Christ. There is "one God and Father," and "one Lord," and "one Spirit." That is the total impression.

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[1] See Acts v 3, 4, 9, vii 51, viii 29, 39, xiii 2, xv 28, xvi 7, xx 28.

[2] Acts vii 55, ix 41, xviii 9, xxiii 11.

[3] Rom. viii 16, 26, 27, Eph. iv 30, 1 Thes. v 19.

[4] 1 Cor. xv 45.

[5] 2 Cor. iii 17. See appended note, p. 549.

[6] And even here, according to the MSS., he also speaks of "the Spirit of the Lord," thus drawing a distinction.

Thus I think we shall give a true account of the doctrine of the Bible as a whole about the Holy Spirit if we say that in the Old Testament the Holy Spirit of God expresses the activity of God in the world, and especially His activity in "inspiring" exceptional men and most conspicuously the prophets; and that He is promised as the special endowment of the future Messiah and of the "servant of Jehovah," and thereafter as the endowment of all men in the Messianic kingdom. But in all this there was very little tendency to speak of the Spirit as a person distinguishable from God. In the New Testament, however, this tendency becomes very marked. The Spirit is still the active energy of God. But there is a very marked tendency to think of Him, lodged as He is in the heart of the Church and in the heart of the individual Christian, as a person—a self-conscious subject—distinguishable from God and from Christ, the Lord or the Son of God, who sends Him.

On the whole I hold it as unquestionable that the Church at the end of the Apostolic Age is found believing, as a result of its experience of Jesus and His Spirit, in three distinguishable agents: (1) God, whom they now know as the Father; (2) Jesus, the Christ and Lord, whom they believe in as the Son or Word of the Father, who for their sakes had been made man, and in that manhood glorified and spiritualized had gone into heaven and had sent down upon the Church (3) the Holy Spirit, His own Spirit and the Father's, to be their helper, strengthener, guide, and intercessor; and their thought of the one God includes that of the three "persons."

(2) *Their mutual inclusiveness.*—But so far we have given but a very one-sided account of the theology of the New Testament. It is true that they believe in one God the Father, and one Lord the Son, and one Spirit of the Father and the Son, each conceived of as divine and personally distinct. But this suggests three Gods, and that is not by any means the total picture. So close a unity is suggested that each *involves* the others. This impression is conveyed quite without the appearance of conscious intention, but very subtly, both in St. Paul and in St. John. In St. Paul the Holy Spirit possesses the Church and its members, so that the Church as a whole and the body of each member of the Church is His temple (1 Cor. iii 16, 17, and vi 19). But the presence of the Holy Spirit, that and nothing else, implies and carries with it the presence of Christ. He treats the Spirit dwelling in us, or our having the Spirit, as equivalent to Christ dwelling in us (Rom. viii 9, 10). And the Spirit (or Christ) dwelling in us implies or involves God dwelling in us (1 Cor. iii 16, 17). Each involves the others. So again it is the Spirit that binds the body, which Christians are, into one, and diffuses in it His manifold gifts. Therefore it is the body of Christ—even Christ Himself—and He also is described, not only as the head of the body, but the all-pervading source of its life and unity (1 Cor. xii 11–13 and Eph. iv 15–16), and the "fullness of Christ" into which it grows is also called the "fullness of God" (Eph. iv 13, iii 19). Though the Three are spoken of as personally distinct, each by His presence and actions involves the presence and action of all.

The three are one. So in St. John the promised coming of the Spirit involves Christ's coming: "I will come unto you." The "other paraclete" is to be no substitute for His absence but the security for His presence. And as He abides in the Father, and the Father in Him, so His coming will be the Father's coming: "We will come unto you" (St. John xiv 16–23). So in creation and the sustentation of nature, Christ is the agent—through Him are all things, and in Him all things consist. For that very reason all things are "through" God as well as from Him and unto Him (Rom. xi 36). This subtle thought appears constantly. The three are by no means *separate* persons. There is, it seems, in the three but one being, one mind, one activity.

The common idea of human persons attributes to them a mutual exclusiveness. They have been described as "impermeable." This impression, however, is largely derived from the separatedness of human *bodies*. When we get to the spiritual self of a man, we find that personality is radically social and deeply permeable.[1] Nevertheless, the impression given us of the mutual interpenetration of the divine Three suggests a unity to which the closest conceivable fellowship of human persons could not approach. It would seem as if the Father can do nothing except through the Son or Word and by the Spirit, and the Son nothing except from the impulse of the Father and in the Spirit, and the Spirit nothing except from the Father and the Son, bringing them with Him in His action.[2]

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[1] See especially Canon Richmond's *Essay on Personality as a Philosophical Principle* (Edwin Arnold, 1900)—a very valuable book which has never received sufficient attention.

[2] It is to be noted, however, as I have mentioned before, that barely a word is said in the N.T., as far as I can ascertain, of the activity of the Spirit in nature or in the conscience of men in general, or anywhere at all except inside the Church. The gift of the Spirit is represented as poured out upon Christ and, through Him, upon

All this has a more absorbing interest because it appears so unintentionally. It all emerges in the process of man's redemption (save so far as cosmic functions are also ascribed to the Son).[1] But it would seem as if, in the process of redemption, we necessarily get some glimpse into the eternal being of God. This appearance of a trinity in unity—as Father and Son and Spirit co-operate in the work of redeeming man—suggests necessarily what God is in Himself. The secret of His being is, as it were, in a measure, overheard. The Church, through its experience of redemption by Father, Son, and Spirit, found itself believing in a trinity of divine persons and (none the less) in the unity of God.

III

It was with this equipment of faith that the Church went out into the world which we have already described as full of intellectual curiosity and the love of abstract discussion, as well as full of a deep sense of spiritual need, which prepared it to welcome any real or pretended revelation from the unseen world. It was required to explain its faith to the outside world, and it found the necessity equally urgent to

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His Church. "The Spirit was not yet" till Christ poured it out, and, except in the channel of the Church, not a word is said suggesting His activity. This silence surely does *not* mean that the Spirit is not the "giver of life" wherever life is. And we are surely right to argue that where the fruits of the Spirit in human goodness appear, there is the activity of the Spirit. But it is very notable that, while the Word of God is said to be the Light which lightens every man, nothing of the sort is suggested about the Spirit. Our attention is solely directed to His action in the Church—so far as the New Testament is concerned.

[1] It is worth noting that we can know nothing (save by very fallible conjecture or reasoning) about the inner relations of the being of God except what is reflected in the original experience of the Church. Thus the ground for belief in the eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father through the Son lies simply in the fact that He did so "proceed" when He was poured out upon the Church.

explain itself to itself. And the stimulus to explanation lay chiefly in various suggestions or theories which might be more or less plausible, but which the Church felt would undermine its faith and its tradition, or were contrary to Scripture—" Scripture " meaning first the Old Testament books and then, as the Gospels and St. Paul's Epistles and the other books of the New Testament were gradually "canonized," the New Testament books also.

As has been already explained in connection with the doctrine of the person of Christ, the Church teachers made many mistakes. The "prophet" Hermas in the Roman Church was widely believed in as a real prophet who received symbolic visions which really came from God; and his moral message was full of edification; but he had no instinct for theology, and his utterances, so far as they concern the doctrine of God, are confused and confusing.[1]

So also some of the apologists, in their attempts to expound the Christian faith in terms of current philosophy, use expressions which were afterwards repudiated by the Church, as when they seem to represent the divine *Reason* as an eternal quality in God which *became* the personal Word or Son only when proceeding forth from God in the act of creation.[2] Inasmuch as the individual teachers were certainly not infallible, mistakes were inevitable. But St. Paul and St. John, when they look back to the beginning before the world was, suggest to us no such idea, but the thought of one who in that eternity already was the Son and the Word of God, with God as His offspring, but distinct from Him.

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[1] He seems to confuse the Holy Spirit with the eternal spiritual being of our Lord; and Justin Martyr's teaching about the Holy Spirit is unsatisfactory, as judged either by Scriptural or later Church standards (see Dr. Armitage Robinson, *The "Apostolic Preaching" of St. Irenaeus*, S.P.C.K.; and Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*, pp. 25–39).

[2] See Dr. Kidd, *Hist. of the Church*, i 359–71.

"He (the Son) is before all things." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."[1]

On the whole the difficulty proved to be to avoid, on the one hand, language which suggested Tritheism —*i.e.* the belief in three Gods rather than one, or one God who was the source of two others, the Son and the Spirit, or who was the source of one other (the Son) and an influence called the Holy Spirit—and, on the other hand, to avoid what came to be called Sabellianism, or Modalism, which sought to describe Son and Spirit as only aspects, phases, or manifestations of the one God and not distinctive persons. On the whole, the danger was greater in the Tritheistic direction than in the Sabellian, for the Church was keenly alive at least to the distinctive being of the Son who was incarnate. One difficulty was that, to start with, there was no word current in Greek or Latin to express "person." You could, of course, describe a human person by calling him a man, or a spirit by calling him an angel or demon or God, and you could talk of mind or soul, but for a person as such—whether God, or angel, or man—there was no current word. It was, in fact, the Christian sense of the value of personality which disclosed the need of such a word. Origen, in describing the "tradition" of the Churches derived from the apostles, which all Christians are bound to hold, describes it as a belief in the one God, the Creator of all that is, and the author of the Old Testament as well as the New, who before all creation was the Father of Him, the Son, through whom all things were made, and who in these last days, emptying Himself, was incarnate and was made man, by a birth of the Virgin and of the Holy Spirit, being and continuing to be God: and in the Holy Spirit as associated in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son.[1] This account of tradition manifestly leaves open questions, especially about the Holy Spirit, which Origen would have men solve by diligent investigation of the Holy Scriptures. Finally, however, it was decided that the Three must be regarded as "of one substance," that is to say, as belonging to the one eternal being of God, and that each must be distinguished as eternally a person—the words chosen to designate "person"—that is, the conscious subject—being the Greek word, "hypostasis," which hitherto had been used in the general sense of substance, and the Latin word "persona," which, meaning first the actor's mask, and then his "part" or the character which he represented, and then the part which anyone is called to play in life, was already trembling on the verge of meaning what we mean by a person. The Fathers are profuse in their apologies for the inadequacy of these terms. Man has no celestial language, but God has revealed Himself so distinctly that we must find the best words we can to describe and guard the revealed reality. After a time, of course, as always happens when a new terminology is adopted, people got used to the terms, and the apologies are not so much heard. The Church doctrine is that God subsists as three persons in one substance or reality. "Deus Pater, Deus Filius, Deus Spiritus Sanctus. Et tamen non tres dii: sed unus est Deus." But it was again and again affirmed that the term "person" is not used of God in exactly the same sense as it is used of human persons. The Three are one in a fuller sense than could be true of three human individuals.

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[1] Col. i 17, John i 1.

Harnack and others have laid great stress upon certain differences of a metaphysical kind which appear to distinguish the way of thinking about the Trinity which we find in the great Greek teachers (Origen and, later, the Cappadocians, Basil and the

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[1] *De Princip.*, i 4.

Gregories) and Latins like Tertullian, from what we find in Athanasius at Alexandria and Augustine in the West. The truth is that the former teachers begin, on the whole, from the thought of the different persons, and then seek to give intellectual expression to their unity, while Athanasius and, especially, Augustine, begin from the unity, and then within the unity are at pains to be true to the distinctions also. There is a difference; and doubtless it would have become considerable if these Church teachers had been merely philosophers pursuing abstract truth. But they had, all of them, behind them the faith of the Church in the one God the Father, and the eternal Son who was incarnate in Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit who had inspired and guided in such and such ways the people of God, and who could only be described as "persons," and who yet belonged to the being of the one God. Granted this, their metaphysical differences, in the extremely rarefied air in which a discussion of the eternal being, whom we know only in part and discern only in a dim reflection, must necessarily proceed, are not, to most of us, of much importance, and easily admit of being exaggerated.[1]

Amongst us, however, Dr. Rashdall has been constantly appealing to the teaching of Augustine and later of St. Thomas Aquinas as if they did not really maintain the distinct and eternal *personality* of Father, Son, and Spirit, but were content to believe in one God in whom "Father," "Son," and "Spirit" are names only for qualities or activities within the one divine mind and being, which are not distinguishable persons at all.[2] Now it is quite true of St. Augustine that, deriving his philosophy from Neo-Platonism, partly through the medium of

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[1] See Tixéront, *Histoire des dogmes* (Lecoffre, Paris); vol. ii gives a very fair account of these differences (pp. 67 ff. and 261 ff.).

[2] Rashdall, *Jesus, Human and Divine*, pp. 24 f., 61f., 67.

Victorinus Afer, he is jealous above all things for the maintenance of the unity of God. And the human analogy which he loves best as pointing upwards to the divine being is the analogy of the distinct *functions* in the single human person—the fundamental *Self* (mind or memory) with its expression in *Thought* (or word), and then again in *Will* (or love); and it is quite true that this analogy of itself would not suggest three persons in the Godhead. It is a manner of thinking the issue of which would be Unitarian, no doubt.

Thus if Dr. Rashdall had said that St. Augustine (and later St. Thomas) uses an analogy which suggests something much less than three persons, he would have said no more than the truth. St. Augustine himself is careful to point this out and correct the impression.[1] For St. Augustine's faith and doctrine is as far as possible from resting on this analogy or on any argument. It rests in the revelation of God contained in Scripture and taught by the Church. And there is no doubt how St. Augustine conceives this revelation, and what his doctrine is. It is familiar to us in the *Quicunque vult.* It is the doctrine of one God in three "persons"—for we must use the term person for lack of a better name. The divine being is one—one substance, one mind, one will. But this divine being exists in three persons, each of whom is whole God, in each of whom the divine mind and all the divine attributes exist personally. You may, of course, say that St. Augustine's doctrine is not intelligible, or you may say that his favourite analogy[2] does not tend to prove his doctrine. But there is no sense in appealing to Augustine as if he did not hold that each of the three persons, of Himself, is whole God, or as if he would tolerate any kind of "reduced" Trinitarianism.[1]

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[1] *Epist.* clxix. 6.

[2] He also uses an analogy which suggests distinction of persons—the analogy of the *Lover* and the *Loved*. Then he tries unsuccessfully to make "Love" suggest a third person (*De Trin.* viii 14).

So it is with St. Thomas Aquinas. He, too, begins from the divine unity. He, too, like Augustine, derives his philosophy of God partly through Neoplatonist channels—the medium being the unknown thinker who wrote under the name of Dionysius, the Athenian disciple of St. Paul, and who was uncritically taken throughout the middle ages to be really that apostolic man. Thus, like Augustine, he seeks to represent to himself the distinctions in the Godhead after the manner of internal relations within a single thinking and willing subject. No doubt this manner of thinking taken by itself would lead to a Unitarian conception of God. But Thomas, no more than Augustine, contemplates the possibility of such a conclusion. He knows that the Christian doctrine of God was not the product of human reasoning, but of divine revelation. He knows that human reasonings could never substantiate the doctrine of the Trinity, though they may be able to approve it, and cannot disprove it. He himself receives the doctrine of the Bible and the Church without a shadow of question. In article after article of his *Summa* he asserts, like Augustine, that the Divine being subsists in three eternal and co-equal persons. The relationships in God are not qualities but persons. Godhead is in essence one and indivisible, but each of the persons in whom it subsists is a distinct person (*alius*) from the others.[2]

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[1] "Tantus est solus Pater, vel solus Filius, vel solus Spiritus Sanctus, quantus est simul Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus" (*De Trin.* vi 9).

[2] *Summa Theol.* pars 1*a*, qu. xxxi, art. 2: "Personaliter alius Pater, alius Filius, alius Spiritus Sanctus." "Cum nomen *alius*, masculiné acceptum, non nisi distinctionem suppositi in natura [a distinction of subject in nature] significet, Filius alius a Patre convenienter dicitur." "Neque tamen dicimus *unicum Deum*, quia pluribus Deitas est communis." "Pater est *alius* a Filio, sed non *aliud*. Et e converso dicimus quod sunt *unum* sed non

It requires indeed a philosophical microscope to distinguish in final outcome the doctrine of the Cappadocians who begin with the Three from the doctrine of Augustine and Aquinas who begin from the One. Both with the like emphasis believe in the one God in three persons.

But I am not writing in the main for those who can move freely in the high air of metaphysical speculation. Probably most of us entertain what seems to us a well-grounded scepticism as to the powers of the abstract reason. But we very earnestly seek to know whether—apart from subtle differences—the traditional Christian doctrine of one God as existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, is for us believable. It is to this question that I must address myself, without raising any question of ecclesiastical authority.

I think the experience of the disciples must be, in some sense, repeated in us. I have already called attention to the fact that the doctrine of the Trinity is clearly there—implicit certainly, and in great measure explicit—in the New Testament, especially in St. Paul and in St. John. It emerged simply in the process of believing in Christ as the Son of God incarnate and in the realized activity of the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of God received from the ascended Christ. I do not think my readers can question this. To believe in Christ, as the first Christians came to believe in Him, involves us necessarily in the thought of God as not a solitary monad. There in the ultimate being is Father and Son—God and His Word or self-expression. There already is the distinction of persons. Perhaps we should have been disposed to think of the Spirit

unus." Cf. qu. xxx, art. 1: "Cum in divinis sint plures res subsistentes in divina natura, plures quoque personas ibi esse necesse est." Cf. qu. xxix, art. 4: "Hoc nomen *persona* dicitur ad se, non ad alterum; quia significat relationem, non per modum relationis, sed per modum substantiae quae est hypostasis."

as only the influence or activity of God in the souls of men. But we must acknowledge that this will not account for the language of the New Testament or the language of Christ, if we believe that He really uttered the discourses in the Fourth Gospel, which it is very hard to ascribe to any lower speaker. Certainly the first Christians felt themselves in their relations with the Holy Spirit as in contact with a person, and so spoke of Him. And if we are constrained to admit distinctions or mutual relationships in God, it seems absurd to originate a hitherto unheard-of doctrine of Duality for the originally Trinitarian belief, when plainly we have no new facts to go upon. Let us see then whether this doctrine of the Trinity commends itself to our reason.

I think we shall probably agree with Huxley that the foundations of things are always mysterious and the doctrine of the Trinity not more mysterious than the ultimate principles of physics or biology. To feel that a belief is rational we must feel—not that we could demonstrate it *a priori*—but that it is grounded in experience and that it interprets experience. It was a true saying of Dr. Hort, who was certainly one of the greatest men of the last generation, that the evidence for the truth of the Christian revelation is shown, not so much in any light which it receives, as in the light it gives.[1] What commends the doctrine of the Trinity is the light it throws on some otherwise dark problems.

1. It alone enables us to think of God as in Himself "the living God" apart from and independently of creation. We have seen at an earlier stage of our argument that the "unassisted" speculative reason of man arrives, with sufficient assurance, at a belief in God, who is the "Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe"—that is at what is called the Higher Pantheism; but that it does not seem to carry us

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[1] See *The Way, the Truth, and the Life* (Macmillan), p. 11.

with any security to a belief in a God prior to and independent of the world. God appears to be as dependent upon the world for self-expression as the world is on Him. He realizes Himself in the world. Perhaps He only attains self-consciousness in the self-consciousness of men. We also saw plainly enough that from a religious point of view such a conception falls wholly short of what men—what most men—need. The religion of the prophets of Israel and of our Lord gave a profound stimulus to human life just because it represented God as a person, perfect and complete in Himself, having the characteristics of a person, wisdom, justice and love in a supreme sense; having a will and purpose for men, who were made in His image, but alive in Himself before ever the world was, the Creator of all that is and the judge of all rational beings. We satisfied ourselves that we must accept the message of the prophets and of our Lord as a genuine self-disclosure of God. But we find ourselves intellectually paralysed when we try to give any meaning to this idea of one self-existent being, alive in Himself with the fullness of life before the world was. For life, as far as we can see, involves relationship, and rational or moral life the relationship of persons. How can we think of an eternal will without an eternal effect or product of this will, or of an eternal consciousness without an object of this consciousness adequate to itself, or of an eternal love without an eternal object of love? To say that God *finds* Himself first in nature is disastrous for religion. But how can He live and love alone? Now, as we have seen, the idea of the Trinity was not evolved in response to any such intellectual questionings. No difficulty appears to have been felt by the Jews or first disciples in believing in God who is one only person. But they found themselves, in the way we have described, as a consequence of their experience of Christ and of the Spirit, believing in a trinity of persons in the one God. A glimpse into God's eternal life seems thus to have been given to men. And the relief to the intellect is great. Now we can see how God can be alive with the fullest life we can conceive of—will and reason and love—because His own being involves in itself a relationship of persons. In the eternity which we cannot with our finite intellects conceive He was productive, and found His object of knowledge and object of love in His eternal Word or Son and in the Holy Spirit. As I have said, this apparent necessity of thought carries us much more completely to the conviction of some relationship of persons than to the specific conception of Trinity. Perhaps it does not surprise us that we do not find our rational powers go far enough to discover God as He is. We shall be content to accept God's self-disclosure as it has been given. But the intellectual relief is great when we find ourself authorized to think of the very being of God as a movement of life in which the Father is eternally expressing Himself and knowing and being known, loving and being loved, in the Son and the Spirit. There is at once the fullness of life in God, for the one eternal being is a fellowship of persons, one with an intense unity, but alive with the movement of a perfect life. I could not have discovered the Trinity. But it is only the disclosure of it which enables me to think about God with any satisfaction as alive and personal in Himself.

2. I am quite able to see that the higher I go up in the scale of creation the more complex does the living organism become. The nature of man is the most complex unity in the world known to us. If I seek to rise to the source and penetrate to the ground of all life, and find this source and ground to be a living God perfect in Himself, the upward soaring train of thought leads me to postulate that

this Eternal Being must be something quite different from a monotonous unity. When I admit the disclosure of Trinity—that is multiplicity in unity—it is only what I should expect in the perfect and absolute being. And I can dimly conceive how there in the eternal Word and the Spirit was the counterpart, under conditions of eternity and perfection, of all that wealth of life which is gradually evolved on a lower plane in the process of creation.

3. Again, only when I am a believer in the Trinity do I seem to lose the sense of bewilderment which the old thinkers of Greece experienced in bringing the One, the Unchangeable and the Eternal, into any relation to a world of which the very being lies in movement and change. The moving world and the unchanging, immobile God seemed not merely to belong to different grades of being, but to be in no possible relation to one another. Does not creation involve movement? Does not God move in the moving world which He sustains in being, and live in its life? But now I am delivered from all this horrible imagination of a God who is absolute immobility. For God is eternally alive—eternally moving out into self-expression. He has the whole movement of absolute life within Himself. Thus to create and to begin to live and act on the lower plane of gradual and progressive creation is no unnatural thought to associate with a God who eternally is life in Himself, because there is in Him what is dimly descried as the eternal generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit.[1]

4. Finally, is it not a delight to believe that the ultimate reality is not monotonous unity, but a unity which contains in itself a fellowship of persons—one with a unity which can never be realized

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[1] This idea is developed by Victorinus Afer, whose importance in his influence on Augustine has not had enough made of it (see art in *Dict. of Ch. Biography*).

among human persons, but which at the same time assures us that personality and personal life essentially involves fellowship? In man personality emerges out of fellowship and always involves fellowship. The idea of personality as primarily individual and fundamentally selfish we have learnt to be false. It is only in fellowship we begin to realize ourselves, and the more widely we expand into fellowship the more we realize ourselves. And it is with delight that we see the ground of this law in the Supreme. For there the eternal being is fellowship. There is no priority in Him of unity to multiplicity, and no priority of multiplicity to unity. The Eternal is one in many and many in one—one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"If reason," says Lotze, "is not of itself capable of finding the highest truth, but on the contrary stands in need of a revelation, still reason must be able to understand the revealed truth, at least so far as to recognize in it the satisfying and convincing conclusion of those upward soaring trains of thought which reason itself began, led by its own needs, but was not able to bring to an end."[1]

Is not this a good description of how reason stands towards revelation in this matter of the doctrine of the Trinity?

NOTE

On the New Testament uses of "spirit," and especially on 2 *Cor. iii* 17; see above, p. 533.

"Spirit" is used in a variety of connected senses in the New Testament, not always easily distinguishable: (1) Of *God* (John iv 24, "God is Spirit") to express His utter freedom from conditions of place or form. As pure spirit He seeks only spiritual worshippers. (2) Of created spirits, good and bad. In almost all cases such spirits are spoken of as persons, but in one or two places "spirit" is used in a sense not unlike ours when we speak of the spirit of the age (see my *St. John's Epistles*, pp. 168–9). (3) Of the human spirit, markedly distinguished from the flesh and from the Spirit of God, see especially 1 Cor. ii 11, 2 Cor. vii 1. (4) Of the whole manhood of Christ, as spiritualized and glorified in heaven. See John vi 63, "The things that I have been speaking to you of—my flesh and blood—are to be thought of as the flesh and blood of the ascended Christ, and therefore as spirit and life, not unprofitable flesh." Burney, I am glad to see, supports me in this rendering, *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 109. So in 1 Cor. xv 45, St. Paul says, "The last Adam became life-giving spirit" (5) Of the Holy Spirit of God which dwelt pre-eminently in our Lord, and after His ascension is given as His own Spirit no less than His Father's, to the Church.

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[1] Lotze, *Microcosmus* (Eng. trans.), ii 660.

Now the question is whether St. Paul in 2 Cor. iii 17, "The Lord is the Spirit," *identifies* Christ the Lord in heaven with the Holy Spirit, contrary, as I have said, to his constant custom of distinguishing them. I think it is very difficult to suppose this. And the passage seems to me to suggest a quite different interpretation. According to the MSS., it runs (ver. 16): "But whensoever the children of Israel shall turn to the Lord [referring to Ex. xxxiv 34] the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Here the sudden transition from the Lord who is the Spirit to the Spirit of the Lord, followed by another transition in the next verse back again to "the Lord the Spirit" seems to me to be so awkward as to make eminently probable the minute emendation[1] of the text proposed by Dr. Hort and Dr. Chase, according to which we should read, "Whensoever it shall turn to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit is Lord, there is liberty. And we all . . . reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed . . . as from the Lord the Spirit." Here St.

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[1] An emendation which only involves the change of υ into ν (κυριου into κυριον). Dr. Chase, however, prefers κυριευει.

Paul no doubt in some sense calls the Spirit the Lord. But I have come to be convinced that it is in this sense: "The Lord to whom Israel must turn is the Spirit [*i.e.* the Holy Spirit now given to the true Israel in the Christian Church]. Only where that Spirit is Lord is real liberty, and it is in the power of this Spirit-Lord that we Christians are being transformed." It is true that St. Paul does not elsewhere call the Spirit Lord, but I think he is led to do so here by the suggestion of the narrative in Exodus: and it appears to me that there is no violence or improbability involved in this supposition, viz. that as St. Paul constantly calls the Father the Lord, and Jesus Christ the Lord, so once he should have called the Holy Spirit the Lord—for obviously He is Lord in Christian souls in the same sense as the Father and as Jesus. This seems to me much more intelligible than that St. Paul should confuse Christ and the Spirit by saying "The Lord Jesus is the Spirit" while he elsewhere so clearly and constantly distinguishes them. It is quite intelligible that St. Paul should once call Christ in His glorified manhood "quickening spirit," as having become wholly spiritual and the source of life to His Church, but surely not that he should call Him "the [Holy] Spirit" with the definite article, contrary to his constant practice.

CHAPTER IX

SIN AND THE FALL

We are now occupied in considering certain ideas and doctrines which are involved or implied in the New Testament doctrine of Christ. And one of the most obvious of these is the idea and doctrine of the sinfulness of humanity. For among the most familiar of the titles of Christ is that of the Redeemer or the Saviour—who "shall save His people from their sins"—and that of the Reconciler, who by making atonement or propitiation reconciles us to God, and that of the Second Adam who inaugurates a new humanity regenerated and renewed in Him. These titles mean that mankind are in a state of unnatural bondage to sin or to the power of evil, and need to have their freedom restored to them by the act of God; and that they are alienated from God and their true good and need to have a new status of sonship conferred on them by the grace of God; and that they belong to a race under condemnation and need incorporation upon a new stock. I suppose no one would be disposed to question that the Bible as a whole views men as being to start with in this unnatural condition, and as needing to be saved from it, and as unable to save themselves. This assumption is stated in a striking form by St. John when he says that "if we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar." For, as Westcott interprets the phrase, "all the communications of God to men presuppose that the normal relations of earth and heaven have been interrupted. To deny this is not to question God's truth in one particular point, but to question it altogether."

I

This is the point then. The Bible is the record of a Gospel of redemption. It is a proclamation of good tidings from God. It holds out to man the highest and most glorious possibilities in Christ Jesus. But it does so on the assumption that in humanity as it stands there is something radically perverted, in view of which it needs for its salvation something quite different from mere example or encouragement to make the best of itself—it needs fundamental reconstruction by Him who originally created it.

I have just said that it will hardly be doubted that this is the Biblical assumption, but we had better examine the assumption a little, and especially we had better examine our Lord's estimate of His brother men.

This estimate, like everything else in our Lord's teaching, is given on the Old Testament background. The Old Testament is full of the picture of mankind within and without the chosen people as a wicked world, in which God is profoundly disappointed and which lies under His just and inevitable wrath. On this dark background there is the radiant picture of the righteous who "walk with God"; but, as the sense of the individual spiritual life develops, even the righteous man appears as sinful and confessing his sinfulness. "There is no man that sinneth not."[1] The record of God's dealings with His saints, Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, is that they are not only "heard" but also "forgiven" and

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[1] 1 Kings viii 46; cf. Eccl. vii 20, Job iv. 17 (R.V. marg.) xiv 4, xv 14–16.

"punished."[1] Isaiah confesses his own sinfulness as well as his people's. "I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."[2] The penitent psalmist acknowledges sin as inherent in his nature even before his birth. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin hath my mother conceived me."[3] This is the tone of the Old Testament. Thus when John the Baptist summons Israel to prepare for the coming of the Christ it is by a call to repentance—a fundamental change of mind—and by a baptism for the remission of sins,[4] and that is represented as the substance of the first preaching of Jesus.[5]

There is no doubt that our Lord is very far from representing human nature as He found it as wholly corrupt. He showed a vivid appreciation of what we should call natural goodness, which He found in those whom the Jews regarded as outcasts at least as much as within the chosen people. He values "the cup of cold water" and every act of natural kindness. He welcomes men who show a right disposition of mind as "not far from the kingdom of God." Also He is extraordinarily gracious to the outcasts. The "publicans and harlots" of society are assured of ready forgiveness. He came, He said, not to call the righteous but sinners. But there is a tendency to misrepresent our Lord's graciousness. Two things are specially noticeable in our Lord's teaching about sin. (1) He dissociated it wholly from physical and ceremonial associations and placed its seat firmly and only in the heart of man.[6] And (2) His main emphasis is on the sins of "the righteous," that is, of those who were so regarded and so regarded themselves. Sins of violence and lust were, of course, regarded as sins and stamped with reprobation in respectable

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[1] Ps. xcix 8.
[2] Is. vi 5.
[3] Ps. li 5.
[4] Mark i 4.
[5] Mark i 15.
[6] Mark vii 20-3.

Jewish society. But Jesus was at pains to bring to light the even deeper sinfulness of spiritual sins, such as were quite consistent with social respectability and involved no ceremonial pollution—hypocrisy or self-righteousness, avarice, pride, contempt, hatred, spiritual blindness and prejudice, and above all unmercifulness and the neglect of active goodness. "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren . . . depart from me." Such sins of the spirit He represents as even more dangerous than disreputable sins. "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." [1]

When our Lord announced the joy of heaven as lying more in the reclamation of the lost than in the righteousness of "the ninety and nine righteous persons who need no repentance," [2] He was speaking to the Pharisees and scribes who murmured at His receiving sinners and eating with them. They are represented in the character of the elder brother in the parable of the prodigal son, and of the righteous Pharisee in the story of the devotions of the Pharisee and the publican. Thus it is impossible to deny an ironical note in this allusion to "righteousness." It was exactly this righteousness which He came to expose as "a whited sepulchre." On the whole it must be acknowledged that while our Lord infinitely deepened the sense of God's willingness to forgive, and refused to regard the outcasts as "hopeless cases," He also deepened and broadened the sense of sin. He appears to assume its universality. Thus it is noticeable that, speaking to His new flock in the Sermon on the Mount and reminding them of the natural goodness of men in their love of their children, He says: "If ye then *being evil* know how to give good gifts," etc. He compares men to Satan's "goods" held in bondage by the "strong man" and waiting for the stronger to deliver them.[1] He claims of men the moral equivalent of self-mutilation[2] as the price to be paid to get rid of sinful inclination; and nothing can exceed the simplicity with which He speaks of hell, with its awful anguish, as the inevitable penalty of tolerated sin, whether sins of omission or of commission. Thus it is quite natural that, when our Lord has in view the kingdom of God which He is inaugurating, He should declare that none can be fit for it without a fundamentally fresh start. "Verily I say unto you, except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."[3] And this fundamental turning appears to be inseparable from discipleship to Himself, which means a very thorough faith in Him as the divinely commissioned Redeemer. This is apparent in the Synoptists. And it is profoundly expressed in the Gospel of St. John. There our Lord is represented as holding Himself aloof from men's first enthusiasm for Him. "Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, and because he needed not that anyone should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man."[4] He knew to start with that sad secret of human untrustworthiness, which in slow and embittering experience has in countless cases and in every age turned philanthropists into cynics and made wise men mad. Therefore He demands of men a deep reconstruction. "Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God," "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."[5]

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[1] Matt. xxi 31.

[2] Luke xv 7; see verse 2.

Certainly this is the spirit in which the first Church in Jerusalem understood its message. It was no announcement to men of a glory which was already theirs, if only they would open their eyes to discern their true nature. Enlightenment was not enough. They needed to embrace by faith a "salvation," now first offered them—offered in a new "name" which was the only name of salvation—and the gateway to this salvation was baptism, which conveyed to them what they could not otherwise receive, the forgiveness of their sins, and prepared them for the new gift of the Spirit.[1] Even the saintly Gentile soldier Cornelius, though the effective appeal of his "prayers and alms" to the ear of God is fully recognized, and though God in merciful manner gives the Holy Spirit to him and his company, is not thereby dispensed from the entrance into the Church by baptism. Like everybody else he needs the new standing ground "in the name," and the forgiveness of his sins.[2]

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[1] Matt. xii 29, Luke xi 21. This applies not only to the "possessed," see verses 23–6.

[2] Mark ix 43–9, Matt. v 27–30, xviii 8.

[3] Matt. xviii 2 [4] John ii 24. [5] John iii 3, 5.

I do not think the New Testament can be accused of any pretension to expound the secrets of divine justice for the satisfaction of our intellect. It does what is much better. It assures us of the character of God and thus enables us to feel quite confident that He will deal in justice and love with every human soul He has created. But it exists to record a Gospel—a salvation for men, publicly proclaimed, and divinely covenanted; and this Gospel is based on an assumption that what humanity needs is something other than development or enlightenment. It needs fundamental reconstruction—a fresh start, a new birth, forgiveness and renewal,—and of all this there is only one source—the Prince of the New Life, the Saviour, the Redeemer Jesus Christ: and this fresh start is offered, so to speak, objectively, as membership in the new community, to those who seek this great deliverance as sinners who need to be saved.

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[1] Acts ii 38–40, iii 19–26, viii 14 ff., xix 4–6.

[2] Acts x 43, 47.

I do not think I need pursue the enquiry through the New Testament. Everyone recognizes in St. Paul the strongest and most vehement maintainer of the corruption of the "natural" man and his need of redemption through faith in Jesus Christ. We will come back to St. Paul directly in connection with the idea of the Fall. I would only say in passing that I think he has been too exclusively judged from the early chapters of the Romans. And even in that Epistle he contemplates "Gentiles who have no law" and yet "do by nature the things of the law"—who "by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality," and who find what they seek, whether Jews or Gentiles: and he speaks of men of old who "had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression."[1] Elsewhere he bids the Christians look for and appreciate (apparently in the world at large) a standard of truth, honour, justice, purity, and virtue.[2] I do not think St. Paul would have been blind to goodness of character wherever found, or would have doubted its acceptableness to God. He is not a systematic theorizer, blind to what does not seem to square with his theory. He is stating a general impression of the Gentile world; and if he paints it in lurid colours, he seems to think that those he writes to will not find the language too strong.[3] Similar language is used by St. Peter to Gentile Christians in similar circumstances: and St. James' estimate of human nature as it is found among the Jews is not less severe.

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[1] Rom. ii 7, 10, 14, v 14.

[2] Phil. iv 8.

[3] The Ephesian Stoic, who about the middle of the first century wrote "letters" under the assumed name of Heracleitus, speaks quite as severely of Ephesian society. See my *Ephesians*, p. 253.

II

The kind of estimate of human nature which we find in the New Testament, both in its optimism and its pessimism—that is, its glorious estimate of what humanity is intended by God to be and is capable of becoming, and its dark estimate of what it has in fact, by rebellion against God, made itself to be—was not out of harmony either with the general sentiment in the period of the Roman Empire when Christianity first spread, or with the general sentiment of the middle ages. In both periods it was natural to men to feel that the world was a very evil world, that nothing that men could do for themselves would make it better, and that they must look for redemption to God and a spiritual world above. But what characterized the early Renaissance, and what reasserted itself[1] in the spirit of industrialism and in modern movements as a whole, at least before the Great War, was a sense of human power—the power of man to redeem himself by his own initiative, especially by the instrument of knowledge in general and the science of nature in particular, which was at his disposal and which he could manipulate in the cause of his own advancement. This is the gospel of the Kingdom of Man. And this gospel has seemed beyond question to make the language of the Bible sound out of date—as if it disparaged the "God in man" which is the only kind of God congenial to this modern spirit.

It is not that the modern estimate of human nature as it is, or as it has actually been found in experience hitherto, is higher than the old orthodox estimate—apart from some mediaeval and Calvinistic exaggerations. Rousseau and Byron and Shelley are as emphatic as the writers in the Bible that "our life is a false nature —'Tis not in the harmony of things." And now-a-days we hear no more of Rousseau's idealizing of natural or primitive man. He is involved in the same condemnation with civilized man. All around us to-day a cynically low estimate of man seems to prevail in ordinary literature—a low estimate of his capacity to restrain his lusts, or to maintain unselfishness, honesty and truthfulness in industrial life or in politics or in the law courts; and the spirit of idealism is fluctuating and weak. What seems to be lacking, where the characteristically modern spirit, in any one of its many forms, prevails, is the readiness to welcome the idea of redemption as the gift of God, or the self-revelation of God which is incidental to redemption. We seem to want a God who is so fully to be identified with *ourselves* that either He must take us as we are, and not judge us or condemn us for our sins, or else (in the case of the more enthusiastic and reforming spirits) that we can find Him sufficiently in our own enlightenment and our own strivings after progress.

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[1] Reasserted itself, I mean, against Lutheranism and Calvinism, which crossed and half-extinguished the spirit of the Renaissance.

But, after all, we are not in very good spirits about progress and world-redemption. There are a great many people, even among agnostics, who are feeling that there is something in the old language about the need of a return to God. What is greatly to be desired in ordinary men is the courageous determination to think for themselves. They have been led captive by the prophets of the modern spirit so as to take it for granted that the Bible religion is antiquated. Now, of course, the traditional religion had become encrusted with antiquated ideas in stagnant ages. And an age which is an age of real and progressive science justly demands of religion correspondence with science rightly so called. But when the matter in hand is the interpretation of human life, which science has not hitherto shown any profound power to interpret or to redeem, it is surely not too much to ask people to reconsider frankly for themselves whether their own reason warrants them in rejecting the estimate of human life and its needs which is undoubtedly Christ's, and the offer of divine redemption which He makes. And it is certain that the optimism of Christianity, its glorious appreciation of human capability and destiny, is bound up with its pessimism —with its profound sense that mankind has set itself by its own sin on the wrong road and needs redeeming by God, who alone can redeem it as He first made it, and can give it the light and stimulus and direction by which alone it can recover itself and realize itself afresh.[1]

When I hear contemptuous rejections of the Biblical estimate of man as he is, as if it were dishonouring to human dignity, I often think of the man who of all the characteristic spirits of the Renaissance had the profoundest genius as an interpreter of man—our own great Shakespeare. No one ever had deeper interest in humanity or a higher estimate of man's capacity.

> "What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!"

No one moreover ever contemplated humanity with less of the spirit of the prophet and the reformer. He was a typical man of the Renaissance. He stood utterly and marvellously aloof from the keen and bitter religious controversies of his time. He seems to know and care nothing about them. He would approach mankind, with all his unmatched genius for understanding and representing it, purely and simply as the spectator—willing to be fascinated and delighted with humanity as he found it, "good and bad together." But, so approaching mankind, one fact about human life appears to arrest him and absorb him and terrify him—the fact that men are not free, as they would boast themselves—that they are enslaved by passion and obsessed by delusion. This note becomes conspicuous first perhaps in the somewhat morbid atmosphere of the Sonnets—in the marvellous 129th Sonnet about lust, where he exclaims—

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[1] I find these suggestive words quoted from Dr. Joh. Weiss, *Das Urchristenthum*, p. 188: "Strange as these things have become to us, we cannot too earnestly make ourselves familiar with the thought that the old Christianity understood the new life not merely as a new mode of thought and moral conduct, but as a wonderful equipment with new powers, the work of God."

> "The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
> Is lust in action."

Then its violence and deceitfulness and its miserable issue is described with intense realization, and the sonnet ends:

> "All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
> To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell."

In the great tragedies this seems to become the one theme—the obsession of men. It may be by lust, or by vanity, or by ambition, or by jealousy, or by pride and the contempt of common men; it may be by the paralysis of too much thinking; but in all cases what is presented to us is the same spectacle of a man obsessed. All the world can see it except he himself. But he, obsessed, is also blinded, and so blinded is driven forward by an inevitable fate to his doom, and only by the violence of the tragedy can the stage of human life be set free again for life to go on its way. This spirit of the tragedies seems to possess Shakespeare. One of our best recent interpreters of Shakespeare—

Walter Raleigh[1]—speaks as if even that mighty mind nearly lost its balance in gazing into the awful gulf. And he seems to have recovered himself in his last period—that of the Romances—by refusing to think any more about it. In one of his last utterances, in which the man himself seems to speak through Prospero's lips, he gives up human life as a riddle without an answer, a dream which has no eternal significance. Certainly he never shows any signs of becoming interested in the faith in divine redemption. But when I hear people reject St. Paul's estimate of human life as a piece of "morbid pathology," I think of Shakespeare and what he seems to have seen in his marvellous mirror.

For myself I make my profession. I have tried honestly and freely to know myself and to study human life all around me and in the record of history; and I know no interpretation of human life which is adequate both to the rays of glory which I see there and the encompassing gloom, except the estimate of the Bible. Man is made to be a king, but he is "a discrowned king": and no one can put him again on the way of honour except his God who made him and would redeem him.

III

The Christian idea of sin was not developed as a philosophy by reflection, but appeared as part of a teaching about God and man which claimed to be a divine message given that men might know how to live. Nevertheless it involves a philosophy in that it places the seat of sin in the will and finds its essence in disobedience or violation of a law known to be divine. So the Bible looks out upon a disordered and miserable world and finds the secret of the disorder and misery simply in the refusal of God by men and other free spirits dimly seen in the background.

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[1] See his *Shakespeare* in "English Men of Letters," pp. 210–12.

So the nature of sin is vividly represented in the marvellous story of the fall of Adam and Eve, which dates, we should remember, before any of the prophets whose writings remain to us. So it is in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms. So it is finally defined at the end of the New Testament period in the First Epistle of St. John in the phrase "Sin is lawlessness"—the Greek words implying that the two terms are convertible—that there is no sin which is not the breach of law by a rebel will, and nothing else in the world which breaks the law of its being except sin (1 John iii 4). It is this doctrine which gives its peculiar hopefulness to the Bible, in spite of its stern view of actual conditions. For there is nothing as God made it which is not good and meant to serve a good end. There is no evil substance. The grossest sins are but the misuse of faculties good in themselves. And however much evil habits may have engrained vice into our nature, let but the will be again replaced in love to God and obedience to His will and the whole nature can be recovered. That is the radical meaning of St. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith; for faith as he uses it means the surrender of our being to God in Christ; and when that is gained God can work freely upon us to accept and to renew. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Thus the world, if it were converted to God, would again become a paradise. And at the last issue all evil wills are to be either converted or subdued, and God is to come into His own again in His whole creation.

This Biblical idea of sin may be put in contrast with three other explanations of it which challenged the Church at its beginning and still challenge it.

(1) In the Hellenistic world in which Christianity spread, the prevalent tendency was to find the secret

and source of sin in the flesh or in the material world. The spark of the divine, which is the soul of man, is imprisoned at present in the body with its corrupting passions and influences, and is subjected to the mysterious tyranny of the material world. What it must hope for is to be released from the body and delivered from the material world, and so be free to resume its place in the pure being of God. And there were a hundred mysteries and doctrines which offered to secure to the initiated soul emancipation at last and passage into the divine. But Christianity stoutly resisted this tendency to fix the blame of sin in the wrong place. To believe that matter is evil and the source of sin—whether as the creation of an evil or inferior God, or as something eternally existing and intractable—is to despair of the world and of our present life in the body.[1] And the Christian's determination to plant and promote the kingdom of God in the world and to consecrate to God every element in nature, including his own body, depends on the belief that there is nothing bad in the world but a bad will, and that man's body as well as his soul, and the whole material creation, are the subjects of divine redemption.

2. It is opposed also to the more modern interpretation of sin, which came into fashion with the dominance of the idea of development, as imperfection which is gradually being outgrown. It is "the tiger and the ape" still surviving in man, which are gradually being subdued to the spiritual

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[1] The belief that the material is the evil accounts for the way in which the Gnostic movements, where this doctrine prevailed, swung between an extreme asceticism and an extreme license. To believe in matter as evil begets the desire to be as free from its bondage as possible—that is the source of oriental asceticism. But after all we cannot be free from the body. To eat and drink, in whatever moderation, is as bodily an action as drunkenness. So arises the idea that all bodily acts belong simply to the temporary envelope of the soul and are morally indifferent. And hence the rebound into license.

or rational purpose. The history of man is the history of a gradual—if slow and interrupted—progress towards perfection. There is, of course, an important element of truth in this conception. Certainly there is a great deal of evil which is ignorance and imperfection, which gradual enlightenment can cure and which itself affords the stimulus to progress. If we try to think of a comparatively sinless world and what its development might have been, we should imagine it as gradually outgrowing its childish ignorance and youthful mistakes—as gradually gaining control, and passing on to perfection in the maturity of its powers. But this is precisely to leave out the very thing which sin is. Sin is the refusal of allegiance to God and rebellion against the law of our true being. It is the selfishness which places our being and its efforts upon a false centre and so disorders our whole world. And sin, rightly so defined, shows not the slightest trace of being outgrown in the process of civilization. There is sin as much in modern London as in ancient Britain, though the sin is of a more or less different kind. Advanced civilization certainly presents a parody of the divine intention for man as much as barbarous societies. Progress no doubt represents the divine purpose, but the reason why progress has been so broken, so fragmentary, and so liable to reversals and catastrophes lies just in the thwarting, disturbing, destructive power of sin, from which neither education nor refinement of itself has the power to redeem. Perhaps to-day the kind of optimistic delusion that I have been describing is one into which we are less liable to be betrayed than our fathers or grandfathers.

3. The Christian doctrine of sin is rooted in the conception of mankind as really free and responsible, and has its roots cut by the doctrine of determinism. According to this latter doctrine, all that has

occurred in general or in detail has been at the last analysis inevitable. There is strictly nothing that need not and ought not to have been. The doctrine is so alien to fundamental human instincts that while it abounds in the schools of philosophy, it does not adventure itself much into the ways of common life. It could not, in fact, really apply itself to life without moral disaster. To believe that I am and always have been and always must be inevitably determined to do what I have done or shall do, would, beyond all question, as it appears to me, destroy the springs of moral action. I have endeavoured, in the previous volume, both strictly to limit the sphere of human freedom and to maintain its reality,[1] and I will not recur to the subject here. I should like, however, to record a remark which I twice heard made by the late Master of Balliol, Dr. Jowett, which seems to me to be true. He noted that theologians like Augustine, and (strictly speaking) St. Thomas, and Calvin appeared to be able to maintain an ultimate and absolute determination of human actions by God, as a sort of remote mystery of religion, without its interfering with the practical moral appeal of Christianity. But he observed that it would not be so with modern scientific determinism. That is no remote mystery hidden in the inaccessible depths of the divine being and incomprehensible by men. It claims to be a requirement of science, its action is in the field of observed experience, and its effect is wholly intelligible. It is to make all our sense of responsibility and personal guilt—all that is really meant by the sense of sin—an illusion and to establish the conviction that we cannot help being just what we are. I am thankful to believe that science is becoming much more conscious of its limitations and is in retreat from this truly irrational position.[1]

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[1] But I will call attention to what seems to me an admirable article in the *Hibbert Journal* for July 1922, by Captain H. V. Knox, entitled *Is Determinism rational?*

IV

There is one difficulty presented by the Christian doctrine of sin which, since the principle of evolution entered into control of our imagination, has appeared and still appears as most formidable—I mean the doctrine of the Fall. Christianity has not been content with asserting that men in general or universally have proved themselves individually sinners. It has attributed to humanity an organic unity, by descent from a common origin—our first parents, Adam and Eve—and has, in part at least, accounted for the prevalence of sin by attributing the disordering of human nature or its partial corruption to the inherited effects of their fall, as it is described in Genesis.[2] There is hardly any allusion in the other canonical books of the Old Testament to this primaeval fall, and though it became a subject of interest in the later Jewish schools and we see the fruit of this in the books we call "apocryphal," yet the ideas there presented are confused and contradictory; and there is nothing about the fall of Adam in the New Testament except in two famous passages of St. Paul's Epistles. But these two famous passages have exercised an enormous influence on theology, so that a modern Roman Catholic writer on dogmatics says, hardly with exaggeration, that "the whole dogmatic system of the Church revolves upon the two poles of sin and redemption, the old humanity and the new, *Adam and Christ*."

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[1] See *Can We then Believe*, p. 52.

[2] I am here only dealing with the doctrine of sin incidentally as involved in the doctrine of Christ's person. Thus (1) I am giving the go-by to all the questions raised about the exact nature and effect of the Fall—whether positive or negative: and to the Augustinian and Calvinistic exaggerations: and to the Protestant conception of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity; though I may remark in passing that I do not think any doctrine of *imputation* can be legitimately attached to St. Paul except in the sense that God sees things not as they are but as they are becoming. This is the *real* way to see things. Thus faith is imputed as the righteousness it is not yet, because faith does, in fact, contain in itself the whole root or principle of righteousness, by retransferring our nature to the allegiance of God in Christ; and Christ's righteousness may be said to be imputed to us, though St. Paul does not say so, because as His members we are in Him and on the way to become more and more interpenetrated by Him. *Non quales sumus sed quales futuri sumus Deus nos amat.*

(2) I am giving the go-by to many interesting questions connected with the Hebrew story of Paradise and the Fall, and its influence in later times. In this connection Ezek. xxviii, which suggests a different idea of paradise from Gen. iii, is very interesting. Also it is interesting that in the later apocalypses it would appear that that unique fragment of unassimilated mythology, Gen. vi 1–8, was exercising more influence than Gen. iii. But I am only concerned here with the idea of the Fall and of its consequences in general outline.

The contradiction between the religious tradition and the scientific conception as popularly stated took this form—that the Bible taught that mankind "began at the top" and fell from his high estate into continually deepening degradation from which only "the elect" are redeemed by the act of God, while science teaches that mankind began at the bottom in a brutish condition, hardly differentiated from the apes, and has gradually climbed upward by his own efforts through the period of some half a million years during which something which can be identified as our race appears to have been on the earth. Here is a startling contradiction indeed. But the statement requires serious revision. It was only the imagination of theologians in a very unscientific age, and especially in England the influence of Milton, which begat the idea of Adam and Eve as created in the full-blown glory of intellect and virtue. Genesis does not in any way suggest it. It suggests for Adam and Eve something like the complete ignorance, as well as the innocence, of childhood. All the beginnings of the arts appear after the fall, and in the line of Cain's descendants.

And the story of Genesis iii makes almost no impression on the rest of the Old Testament, which is throughout the story of a divine purpose for man pursuing its gradual way to its goal, but constantly thwarted and baffled by human sin. This is the impression which the early Christian teachers received. They answered the question whether man was created perfect in the negative. "He was not created perfect, but only in a condition to attain or receive perfection."[1] So we may restate the position thus: "The Bible teaches that man was created free to correspond with a good purpose of God for him: and his advance towards the realization of his heritage of sovereignty in the world might have been inconceivably more glorious and unimpeded than it has been but for his constantly renewed and perpetuated disloyalty to God and disobedience to the law of his being. It is to this that his misery is due. And as he was made for constant dependence upon God, so he cannot hope to rescue *himself* out of his bondage, but only to be rescued by God when he will return to Him in penitence and surrender." Now I am not aware that such a revised statement brings us into any collision with science. We must not speak as if science could bring human origins into the clear light. The emergence of the distinctively human faculties, and the place and the manner of such emergence, are still involved in impenetrable obscurity.

But this at least seems to some of us to be certain —and to make a great difference between us and our grandfathers—that we have ceased to be able to treat the story in Genesis as history at all. We see there neither a record preserved in human tradition, nor a revealed history of what happened at the beginning. We are not disposed to think that mankind began in a single pair sharply differentiated from the lower animals. We find it very difficult to form any mental conception of how things happened "in the beginning." We are inclined to think that about the beginnings and endings of the world and of mankind—about things which lie outside the possibility of experience or investigation by us—we can be taught only in parables or symbols. So we are ready to attach the highest value to the early chapters of the book of Genesis, taking the stories they contain as symbols, not history. We see in them the clearest traces of divine inspiration. We see there true ideas about God and His mind—about the world and man's relation to the world and his relation to God, about the origin and nature of sin and its consequences, and about God's dealings with man both in judgment and mercy—all so vividly expressed that a child can understand them and the imagination of mankind can never get rid of them.

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[1] So Clement and, in effect, Irenaeus. The Fathers also knew that death was a law of the world before man; and that man was created mortal by nature.

But, granted all this, we need to ask ourselves whether the language of St. Paul about the effect of the sin of Adam in letting loose the forces of death, and constituting mankind sinful, can still be used by us; and whether generally the idea of the Fall and the antithesis of the Old Adam and the New has still really for us the equivalent of its old meaning.

I think so in this sense.

1. Sin—*i.e.* disobedience to God and the law of our being—essentially and always is a fall. Indirectly it may be through sin that we make discoveries about ourselves and the world. So sin may be a condition of progress. But not a necessary condition. We could have gained the fruit of the tree of knowledge without sin, for sin is always a perversion and a loss. It puts us in a wrong relation

to ourselves and to our fellows and to God. Everywhere, in all its forms, and in every case sin is lawlessness and therefore is a fall. We are fallen by our iniquity. Thus Adam and Eve stand for every man and woman, and the story of their fall is the true story of humanity and of what has been its ruin in every individual case. And over against the Old Adam, which is sinful humanity, stands the Last Adam, which is the sinless humanity. Thus in Jesus Christ I see humanity both restored to its true basis and its true relations, and not only restored but perfected in God. And I apprehend the true character of my redemption only when I grasp it as a radical transference of my fundamental allegiance, and so of my whole being, from the stock of the Old Adam to that of the New.

2. I do not think we shall be driven to accept a merely individual account of sin. I do not think that more accurate science will make us hesitate to say with the Psalmist, " In sin hath my mother conceived me." Whatever science ultimately teaches as to the " monophyletic " or " polyphyletic " origin of mankind, I think it will continue to authorize us to regard mankind as constituting one race which can be dealt with, whether barbarous or civilized, as having certain fundamentally identical spiritual capacities—that is, intelligence (as distinct from instinct), the moral conscience, and some measure of moral freedom, capacity in some measure for enlarging fellowship and progress, and capacity for God. It appears to me that anthropology and the science of religions work on the basis of the assumption that humanity of all periods and in all countries is one race, and continually tend to justify the assumption.

Further, it seems to me that psychology tends to emphasize what is the Christian tradition that a man's soul, or self, is not purely individual. He is an individual with the responsibilities of an individual, and progress towards the ideal will deepen and intensify his individuality. But that mysterious and elusive thing he calls himself carries within it elements and qualities which are inherited and not personal, and which make him the representative of something much wider and much older than his individual self—of his family, his race, nay of humanity as a whole. In his unconscious mind he carries (so it appears) instincts and memories which are racial and not personal. If this is so, it would be very bold to deny that there may be, or must be, some inheritance of sin, in its weakening and perverting effect upon the spiritual nature, in those roots of our being which lie below the beginnings of personal consciousness.[1]

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In this book I am only concerned to justify a certain attitude towards man, as fallen and needing to be redeemed, which appears to be inseparable from the appeal of Christianity—which appears to have been the attitude of Christ Himself. This appeal takes shape in St. Paul's language which bids us die to the Old Manhood that we may live in the New. It treats us as belonging to an old manhood—the Old Adam—which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and would have us regenerated or grafted upon a new stock—the sinless humanity of the Second Man. It would have us believe that by natural inheritance our old manhood came to us more or less weakened and impaired by Adam's sin, but that it admits of being restored and renewed in Christ. No doubt St. Paul believed in Adam as a person and we cannot easily do so. Nevertheless, I think that there is very little or nothing in St. Paul's language which will not hold good for us if we take the Old Adam, not as an historical person, but as the symbol of our race as it has made itself by sin, to which by our birth and natural tradition we belong. And there is no force in the strange argument that if the First Adam is symbolical, so may be the Second. We are driven to treat the first as symbolical because we cannot penetrate the mists of ages. But the Christ stands in the light of history. We know that He understands our nature, and we believe He has the will and the power to redeem it.

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[1] I think it is important to note that "original sin" is a fault or defect or disorder in our inherited nature, which admits of more or less. One man's nature is more disordered to start with than another's. And the fault or defect can be diminished by self-restraint or deepened by indulgence. Also, it is important to notice that there is nothing in the New Testament which justifies our using the word "guilt" of this inherited taint. No doubt it disqualifies us as it stands for the fellowship of God; but nothing is guilty except the action of a rebellious will. The defect of nature in itself is an appeal to the divine compassion to redeem us, not an occasion of His wrath against the individual personally.

In the book which precedes this I have dealt with the New Testament accounts of the Birth of Jesus as from a Virgin and therefore miraculous. I have there endeavoured to make it plain that this history was not the *product* of any theological demand. It shows in both its forms—both in St. Matthew and St. Luke—the signs of a date far earlier than any such theological or Christological development as would have made the demand effective. I have given what seem to me sufficient reasons for trusting the story; and I can only refer my readers back to what was said there. But I have also pointed out that already in the Fourth Gospel, where the story in the Synoptists is no doubt assumed as familiar, Christ's birth of a virgin appears to be referred to as lying behind and interpreting our new birth. St. John, that is, here as elsewhere, assumes what is in substance St. Paul's doctrine of the Second Adam; and he suggests that the miraculous conditions of the birth were appropriate or necessary for the incarnate person who is to be the fount of the new sonship. I cannot but repeat here that what

St. John suggests and the Church has emphasized does appear to me to hold good, viz. that any one who grasps the contrast between the sinless Christ and the sinful world—the world in which the greatest saints are the most conscious of their sinfulness—and who accepts Christ as the Second Adam, the new creation in which our manhood is renewed, so far from finding a difficulty in the Virgin Birth of Jesus will welcome it as in the highest degree acceptable and congruous in His case, if not rationally necessary.[1]

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[1] For all this see above, pp. 274–82, and *Dissertations*, pp. 63 ff. See also in this book, p. 416, and note 1, for St. John's reference (in cap. i. 13) to the Virgin Birth as the basis of our regeneration.

It ought to have been pointed out that the phrase "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. ii 3) refers to men living in actual sin "doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind," and that we have no justification for applying it to infants.

CHAPTER X

THE ATONEMENT

THE idea of atonement made by our Lord for man in the sacrifice of the cross is so prominent an element in the faith of the New Testament and of the whole Christian Church, that it cannot be ignored in any comprehensive treatment of the faith in His person. It has found a welcome as wide and deep as possible in human hearts all down the ages; but it has also presented peculiar difficulty to the intellect. What is attempted in this chapter is simply to fix attention upon the central idea of the Atonement, as the New Testament presents it to us upon the background of the Old, and to rid it of certain misunderstandings which have been allowed to pervert it. Then I should wish to leave my readers with the feeling—This, at least, is part of the faith in Christ to which my heart and my reason respond.[1]

I

Let us seek to clear the air by certain preliminary considerations.

1. It is plain that the redemption of man through Jesus Christ, which the New Testament has for its theme, is a complex process which admits of being regarded in various aspects or from different angles.

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[1] It must be remarked that while the Church did in fact define the doctrine of the person of Christ, it left the doctrine of atonement quite undefined.

Hence there are marked differences in the points of view of the different books. But they all agree among themselves and with the books of the Old Testament in one point: that ultimately redemption can mean one thing only—the actual restoration of men into the moral likeness of God. The kingdom of God, which is the theme alike of the Old Testament and of the New, is to be a perfected fellowship of man with God and of man with man; and there can be no fellowship of man with God "except they be agreed"—that is, except they be of the same mind or character; and there can be no fellowship of man with man unless they come together in obedience to God and correspondence with His purposes.

Men are prone to superstition; and the best definition of superstition is religion which is non-moral. And there has been a great deal of superstition not only in the religions of the world generally, but also among the Jews and in Christendom, both Catholic and Protestant. Wherever men have attributed some kind of power to racial privilege, or to orthodox belief, or to sacraments or charms, or to the prayers of intercessors, which can in any sort of way be a substitute for actual conversion of will—for ceasing to do evil and learning to do well; wherever men have proclaimed or believed in Christ's atonement, or His righteousness "imputed to us," as if it could be made available for us without our being personally changed from evil to good—there is superstition; and the teaching of the prophets and of Christ is on no point more emphatic than in condemnation of this sort of superstition. No expedient or device can exist for bringing us into the favour of God except by our becoming actually godlike. "In the rich pharmacopoeia of heaven, there can exist none such." To be and to remain unlike God in character must exclude us from the fellowship of God, however correct our beliefs and elaborate our ritual acts; and, conversely, the Bible as a whole encourages us to believe that there is no external or accidental barrier, whether in the way of intellectual error or hereditary ignorance, which can ultimately exclude from God and His kingdom any man who is really a man of good will. Heaven is nothing else but the home of the godlike; and hell is nothing else but the state of those who have made themselves, by their own faults, radically incompatible with God. There is no substitute for a good will, and no compensation for a bad one. Thus whatever place vicarious atonement, made for us by our Redeemer, may hold in the scheme of the Bible, we must expect it to conform to this fundamental demand for real, personal righteousness.

2. "My song," says the Psalmist, "shall be of mercy and judgment." Such is the theme of the Old Testament and of the New—God's inevitable wrath on the hard and impenitent heart, and His abounding mercy on the repentant. God is forgiving, as being both willing and able to efface sins however heinous. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." But only repentance—that is the change of heart and will—can change the face of God towards us. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Such is the constant theme of the prophetic message. And it is the theme of our Lord's teaching also.

We find Him asserting the forgivingness of God towards the penitent in the most moving language, both parabolic and simple. It is as expressing the Father's mind that He came "to seek and save that which was lost." And we note the stress He lays on the necessity of a changed heart. That is the only evidence that a man is really forgiven. So the unthankful servant in the parable[1] finds that his acquittal, though it had been formal and valid, is invalidated by his showing himself still quite hard-hearted. And on the other hand the woman that was a sinner proves that she has been forgiven by the generosity of her devotion to Christ.[2] Where such love is, forgiveness must have already been given. Here we have the teaching of the prophets intensified. God certainly needs no propitiation to make Him *willing* to forgive; and nothing is needed by the individual to secure his forgiveness by God but the contrite heart which responds to His love.

3. All this teaching about God we are surely meant to apply to the relations of God to all men individually, in whatever ignorance of God they may have been nurtured, for it expresses fundamental principles of His being. Nevertheless, the constant assumption of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is that men need something besides true ideas about God. They need an activity of divine power to rescue them from a hopeless condition into which rebellion against God has plunged them, and this activity of God is what is called redemption. The Bible is a history of divine redemption, and it is only in the process of redemption that the disclosure of the real character of God is made. As has been shown in the previous chapter, no one can understand the Bible, Old Testament or New, whose imagination is not filled with this conception of man as needing to be not enlightened only but redeemed.

And further this method of divine redemption, though its ultimate aim is universal, proceeds through the election of one people, Israel, to be the redeemed people; and when in the New Testament

[1] Matt. xviii 21–35.

[2] Luke vii 47.

the Church or people of God is freed from all national restrictions, nevertheless it is the society, and not barely the individual, which is both the subject and the instrument of divine redemption. The method of divine redemption is corporate. No doubt this is to trench upon the topic of the Church, with which we are not concerned in this volume. Nevertheless, it is in its most general sense hardly open to doubt; and it must in some sort be here taken for granted because the idea of atonement has its roots throughout in this corporate method of redemption.

4. This is indisputably so in the Old Testament. God made a covenant with the people of Israel as a whole, and the covenant was inaugurated and perpetuated in sacrifice, the sacrifices of bulls and goats, as being in some sense representatives of the people or substitutes for the men who offered them. The sacrificial system expressed their allegiance as a people to God and His law, and the fear wherewith they were to fear Him. The customs of sacrifice date from a time when the people had no understanding of the moral character of God, and the early prophets appear simply to deride them as worthless. But later, through the teaching of the unknown prophet of Deuteronomy and the mission of Ezekiel, the spirit of prophecy and the law of the sacrifices were conciliated. Thereafter the sacrificial system is made to express Israel's constant need of walking with awe before the face of the righteous God and making constant atonement for its corporate and individual sins; not for its high-handed sins of rebellion and defiance of God, for which the sacrifices did not avail,[1] but for its sins of carelessness and ignorance. Of course the consciousness never left the deeper minds in Israel that "the blood of bulls and of goats" could not really "take away sin." Nevertheless, the temple worship nourished in the

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[1] See *Epistles of St. John*, pp. 209 ff.

heart of Israel a deep sense of its constant need of propitiation. There is no question of this. What is questioned is whether this whole system was not by Christ ignored and abolished as meaningless—whether in His eyes it pointed on to anything which He was to fulfil and not to abolish.

5. Our Lord would appear to have said nothing about the temple sacrifices. He denounces the Pharisaic tradition as a misuse of authority and a perversion of religion. But He said not a word against the sacrificial system. Presumably He accepted it as a divine institution though imperfect. But He positively attached Himself to something in the Old Testament—the prophecy of the Righteous Servant—which gave a wholly different idea of vicarious sacrifice and propitiation on behalf of the nation. The Righteous Servant in Is. liii is represented as inaugurating the new Israel of the Restoration by the vicarious sacrifice of himself.[1] He in his innocence bearing the sins of the people offers his life as a guilt-offering to God. And God accepts the offering—the offering of the one for "the many." The righteous victim of unrighteousness becomes the effective intercessor for "the many"; and they, for his sake forgiven and by his knowledge and instruction made righteous, constitute the restored Israel. He sees in them the travail of his soul and is satisfied.

This moving picture of vicarious sacrifice appears to have made strangely little impression upon the later literature of Israel. But we perhaps have a reflection of it—though it suggests a lower conception of God—in the heroic self-oblation of the Maccabean martyr to expiate the wrath of God upon his nation. His six brothers have been martyred in the persecution of Antiochus, in presence of the tyrant and of their mother, who stands by and exhorts them to constancy. Then the youngest, who has seen all his brothers tortured and killed, makes his brave profession, before he follows them: "These our brethren, having endured a short pain that bringeth everlasting life, have now died under God's covenant; but thou, through the judgment of God, shalt receive in just measure the penalties of thine arrogancy. But I, as my brethren, give up both body and soul for the laws of our fathers, calling upon God that He may speedily become gracious to our nation; and that thou amidst trials and plagues mayest confess that He alone is God; and that in me and my brethren the wrath of the Almighty may be stayed, which hath been justly brought upon our whole race."[1]

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[1] See above, pp. 355 ff.

Whether we have here a reflection of the thought of the later Isaiah or no, we cannot, without a quite arbitrary rejection of well-authenticated texts, doubt that our Lord identifies Himself with the Righteous Servant,[2] and this means that He sees Himself as the inaugurator of the New Israel, and knows that by His voluntary death, on behalf of the people, He is to make propitiation for their sins. Both the crucial texts are, as has been said, stamped with the mark of their origin by the expression "for many." The first (Mark x 45, Matt. xx 28) is the phrase "The Son of man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many." The actual words used only lay stress upon the price of His life which He must pay to set His people free. The idea of an offering for sin made to God lies in the prophecy referred to rather than in the words taken by themselves.[1] The other passage, at the Last Supper, is much more explicit: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many,"[2] or "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."[3] These phrases suggest unmistakably a reference not only to the sacrificial death of the Righteous Servant "for many," but also to the sacrifices of animal victims which inaugurated the covenant of Sinai, "Behold the blood of the covenant."[4] This is our Lord's only reference to the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant; and He declares that the New Covenant is to be inaugurated also in blood—the blood of His own self-sacrifice, by which the many are to be given their new standing-ground before God. In winning this new standing for His people, He, we should gather, is their vicarious representative. He is acting for them, without any co-operation on their part.

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[1] 2 Macc. vii 36–8. In 4 Macc. vi 28–9 (an Alexandrian book) the martyr Eleazer is represented as praying "Be propitious to thy race, being satisfied by our punishment for them. Make my blood an expiation (καθάρσιον), and my life (ψύχην) a substitute (ἀντίψυχον) for theirs." And the author concludes (xvii 22) that "through the blood of these pious men and their propitiatory death, the divine providence saved Israel."

[2] See above, p. 357, where the point is argued.

There is here no contradiction of the teaching, so often given by our Lord, of the free forgiveness of sins by the Father wherever He sees a penitent heart. But it supplements it. God is still to deal with men, not as isolated individuals, but as a people. It is the new Israel which is being inaugurated, and the new Israel must be inaugurated in sacrifice—not now the sacrifice of animal victims of which God had no need, but the self-sacrifice of the Man, which knows no limits and goes even to offering His life-blood. That is the basis of the New Covenant.

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[1] The figure of the "ransom," by suggesting the thought of a bandit or tyrant who held the prisoners, became the basis of the strange theory, common in early and mediaeval days, of a transaction between Christ and the devil, in which the devil, by putting Christ to death, took more than his "rights" of the Sinless One, and so had no further claim on men. But we can never rightly press either a metaphor or a parable beyond the special point of comparison—in this case the greatness of the price needed to set men free. It was by a similar misuse of a metaphor that "propitiation" was made to suggest that God's mind towards man needed to be changed, on which see below, p. 591.

[2] Mark xiv 24. St. Matthew adds (xxvi 28) "unto remission of sins."

[3] This is the phrase used in the earliest account of the Last Supper which St. Paul received "from the Lord," doubtless through the older apostles.

[4] Exod. xxiv 8. In other passages of the New Testament the sacrifice of Christ is regarded as fulfilling the Passover, the Day of Atonement, and the Sin Offering (see Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 92).

6. If we are to trust the Fourth Gospel, we must believe that John the Baptist had anticipated this function of the Christ when he called Him "the Lamb of God which taketh away (removeth by expiating) the sin of the world." But whether or no "the critic" can bring himself to trust the Fourth Gospel at this point, he must acknowledge that the expiation wrought by the self-sacrificing death of Christ is taken for granted in the whole of the New Testament which looks back upon Him. It is taken for granted in the first Jerusalem Church, as appears when St. Philip interprets of Jesus the sacrificial language of Is. liii. It is implied when baptism "in the name of" Jesus or "by invoking His name" appears as the condition of the forgiveness of sins; for this means that His merit alone avails for remission[1]; and this belief pervades the New Testament. It is in popular estimation specially attributed to St. Paul. But it was already in "the tradition" as St. Paul received it at his conversion.[2] He places it, no doubt, in a special light, but that is all. On this special light, however, in which St. Paul views the doctrine of Atonement we must say a word.

7. St. Paul, then, especially in the Epistle to the Galatians, is occupied with the claim of the Judaizers who would have insisted on the perpetual obligation upon Christians of the Jewish Law, as represented by the rite of circumcision. And still in the Epistle to

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[1] Acts ii 38, viii 16, 32–5, x 43, 46.

[2] 1 Cor. xv 3, "That which also I received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." See Dr. Rashdall, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*; quoted below, p. 599.

the Romans their claim occupies the foreground. As against such a claim he represents the Jewish Law as a temporary expedient to convict the Jews of sin and to prepare them for Christ. This conviction of sin he presses to the full. The Jews, no less than the Gentiles, find themselves involved in sin and unable to endure the tremendous judgment of God. They need to be saved. They cannot save themselves. God must save them. And that is what He has done in Christ. It is a salvation full and perfect that God has provided for men in Christ, and which the apostles are sent into the world to proclaim, and it is wholly the work of God in Christ, an act of divine grace and good favour which man has not merited, and to the accomplishment of which he contributes nothing. On the whole, St. Paul never leaves us in any doubt that the salvation which is offered us of God's free bounty is nothing else than real deliverance from the power of sin into actual goodness or moral freedom, by the full co-operation of all our powers with the purpose of God. But in the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans, which Protestantism has unduly isolated from the whole of St. Paul, he presses to the full—even to the point of letting it appear arbitrary—the initial stage of the divine "plan of redemption"—that is, the new status—the acquittal ("justification") or forgiveness of sins—won for us by the "propitiation" of Christ. Wholly without any regard to our merits or our demerits, wholly out of the bounty of His free grace, without any co-operation of ours, God has provided in Him who is the Head of the New Race, the Second Adam, Jesus Christ, a "making amends" for all the guilty past. His unqualified sacrifice of Himself—unto death and the shedding of His blood—is accepted as something which sets free the love of God to flow out in the full stream of redemptive bounty. Let a man, Jew or Gentile, only believe—that is, let him surrender himself to God in Christ and accept His grace, in utter humility and the response of faith to love—and he is acquitted, wholly without regard to the magnitude and multitude of his sins. He is given a fresh start, a fresh status in Christ—of which baptism is the instrument—to live the new life of sonship to God and brotherhood in the community of the redeemed, the Church.

On St. Paul's special teaching about the Atonement I must make two remarks.

(1) St. Paul least of all men admits of being judged by single texts. He does not guard himself in argument. He must be judged on the whole. And so judged, there is no possibility of questioning that St. Paul meant by faith a moral response and not merely an intellectual acceptance. It is self-surrender; it is the response of will to love; it is love inchoate. He explicitly says (within a year of writing the Epistle to the Romans) that faith which does not involve love is worthless.[1] He always assumes that faith involves baptism, and baptism is entrance into the new life. He never contemplates belief without discipleship.[2] This becomes overwhelmingly clear in the epistles of the captivity. But it is clear from the time when he wrote to the Thessalonians. Only in his Epistle to the Romans, he is determined to make men see their own worthlessness apart from God—that their only hope is in Him and His unmerited grace—and that the salvation won for them was, in its initial stage, an act done wholly without their co-operation and *for* them.

(2) The reason suggested by St. Paul, quite incidentally, why God should have needed such a "propitiation" before He could let the proclama-

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[1] 1 Cor. xiii 2; cf. Gal. v 6.

[2] I think Dr. Rashdall, *op. cit.* p. 116, is justified in saying that "at bottom the Catholic theory of justification finds more support in St. Paul, and is far nearer his real thought, than the Protestant theory in its strict traditional form."

tion of His free-flowing grace go forth among mankind, is apparently[1] that it was necessary to safeguard the reality of the divine righteousness at the moment when it was showing itself as mercy. This is secured if the act which is the instrument and occasion of divine acquittal is an act which placards before men's eyes the awful price by which their redemption was bought. But we will return upon this suggestion.[2]

8. It is remarkable that, though St. Paul won an undisputed victory over the Judaizers, yet his special arguments in the Galatians and the Romans about the relation of law to grace, and about justification by faith, produced little impression upon the Church as a whole. Part of this argument was taken up in a perverted form by Marcion; much of it again by St. Augustine. But it did not generally colour the theology of the Church. On the other hand, the doctrine of atonement won by the self-sacrifice of Christ, or the shedding of His blood, is equally present as a central point of faith in almost all the books of the New Testament,[3] and in the Church as a whole.

It is the recurrent theme of the First Epistle of Peter that that which "redeemed" the Church was a ransom of infinite value—"precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ" (1 Pet. i 18, 19)—"because Christ suffered for you" (ii 21)—"bare our sins in his body upon the tree" (ii 24)—"suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God" (iii 18).

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[1] Rom. iii 25–6.

[2] On special phrases of St. Paul, see appended note B, p. 600.

[3] It does not happen to be mentioned in the very brief Epistle of Jude, nor in the Epistle of St. James, which is purely ethical. But even here I think Dr. Hort is probably right in translating St. James v 6 (cf. iv 4) "Ye condemned, ye murdered, the Righteous One. Is He not become your adversary?" If so, "the Righteous One" is probably a reference to Is. liii; cf. Acts iii 13–14, "Jesus his servant, the holy and righteous one," whom "ye killed." And this would probably indicate that the idea of Atonement through the Righteous Servant's death lay in the background of James's mind.

Again the point of view of the great Alexandrian teacher who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews is that of the High Priesthood of Christ. For, pre-existing as the Son of God, He took our nature, soul and body, that in our nature, but with more than human power, even in eternal spirit, He might offer to God the perfect sacrifice for sins, even Himself—the sacrifice of perfect obedience consummated in the shedding of His blood—and so enter into the heavenly places to be our High Priest, our effectual intercessor, and to "cleanse our consciences from dead works to serve the living God." Here again the whole status of the Church is made to depend upon the sacrifice of the cross.

Again in the Apocalypse the same dominant idea reappears in the new song of the redeemed which the heavenly beings sing to "the Lamb standing as it had been slain in the midst of the throne." "Thou wast slain and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests." Here again it is to the sacrifice of the cross that the status of Christians as a body is attributed. And finally in St. John's Gospel, though very little is said about atonement, yet Jesus must die for the people of God before He can save it and enlarge it (xi 51, 52), and in the First Epistle, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (1 John ii 2; cf. iv 10). It appears to have been a subject, like the final "coming" of Jesus, which St. John thought was sufficiently familiar in the common tradition of the Church, so that he could lay his emphasis where it was more needed. But he plainly took it for granted.

II

This book is not a treatise on the Atonement, and it would lengthen it unduly if I were to attempt to review the history of the doctrine in the Christian Church. The most learned recent analysis of this history which we have is Dr. Rashdall's. He is quite right in calling attention to the extent to which the moral appeal of the death of Christ is emphasized by the Fathers and schoolmen, and to which the aspect of atonement in the work of Christ is, by some theologians, merged in the general doctrine of the Incarnation and its effects. But he labours in vain, as it seems to me, to dislodge from its position in the Christian tradition the belief which, as we have seen, is so prominent and indisputable throughout the New Testament—that, prior to all appropriation by men, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, of the fruits of the Incarnation, there had been on the part of Christ, as the Redeemer of men and the Inaugurator of the New Manhood, a sacrifice offered to the Father, a sacrifice of obedience unto the shedding of His blood, in virtue of which God was enabled freely to justify, or acquit, those who belong to Him, and to give them a new standing ground as sons of God and members of Christ. Everything in the New Testament appears to depend on this initial sacrifice of atonement, reconciliation, and propitiation.

I do not, as I have said, propose to follow the various theories which by Origen and Leo, by Abelard, by Anselm, by the Calvinists, by Dale and Denney, by McLeod Campbell and Moberly, have been elaborated to explain the Atonement and account for its necessity. But in no district of theology is the contrast so marked between the hesitating and critical attitude displayed towards these intellectual theories of atonement which individual scholars have striven to formulate, and the whole-hearted acceptance of the fact by the great body of the faithful in all ages. Everywhere where Christianity has spread animal sacrifices, and indeed everything which men had been accustomed to call sacrifices, have ceased, because in becoming Christians men have learned about the one, full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, which renders all others needless and gives to the idea of sacrifice a new meaning. The popular appeal made by the Eucharist or Mass in Catholic Christendom is more than half to be accounted for by the fact that there, by universal acknowledgment, is presented to God, as covering all our approach to Him, the one availing sacrifice. It is a quite modern hymn which bids us pray:

> "And now, O Father! mindful of the love
> That bought us, once for all, on Calvary's tree,
> And having with us Him that pleads above,
> We here present, we here spread forth to Thee
> That only offering perfect in Thine eyes,
> The one true, pure, immortal sacrifice."

It is a modern hymn, but it expresses in language at once devout and accurate what the heart of the worshipping Church throughout the world has believed and welcomed with adoring love: and the whole purport of the hymn-singing of Protestant Christendom, and the whole strength of the appeal of revivalist preaching, has witnessed to the undying power of the doctrine of the Atonement. It is hard to believe that anything not grounded in truth could have made such an appeal and received such a world-wide welcome. We isolate ourselves from the "general heart of man" if we ignore its power or deny its necessity. The instinct which welcomes it has its roots in Hebrew Scriptures, but it has its roots also in the various theologies of almost every non-Christian tradition. The beliefs may be crude or barbaric,[1] just as the later theories of atonement in the Christian Church may be morally or intellectually unsatisfying; but it is almost impossible to believe that God is at work in all the widespread instincts of men without also feeling that the instinct which has led men to seek in sacrifice atonement with God is a divine instinct, which Christianity must have expressed and satisfied if it was to be what it claims to be—the religion for all mankind.

What I propose to do is to consider the chief moral and intellectual scandals which have been found in our time in the doctrine of the Atonement as commonly preached, to see whether they really belong to its essence, or to its scriptural presentation: and then to consider whether we can find such a rationale of the doctrine as shall make it welcome to our intellects as well as our hearts.

1. First, then, let us recognize that any presentations of the doctrine which suggest any difference of mind or disposition towards men between the Father and the Son—which represent the Father as Justice demanding punishment for sin and the Son as Mercy, pleading with Justice and satisfying it by offering itself as an innocent victim in place of the guilty—are radically unscriptural. In the New Testament, quite constantly, the mind of the Father is declared to be towards men purely good—the mind of love—and the cost of the sacrifice is represented as the Father's no less than the Son's. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-

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[1] The story of the sacrifice of Iphigeneia to Artemis, to procure good sailing for the Greek fleet, is taken as the type of the belief in sacrifice at its worst, but it is interesting to see how Euripides (in the *Iphigeneia in Aulis*) half moralizes the story by making Iphigeneia offer herself voluntarily for the cause of Greece, and by making Artemis save her and carry her to Tauris, substituting for her an animal victim, as in the Bible story.

begotten Son"[1]—"spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all."[2] Wherever we find the necessity for the sacrificial death to lie, we must utterly refuse to find it in anything in the Father's mind making Him unwilling to forgive, or distinguishing in any way His mind in the matter from Christ's. The essential wrath of God over sin is Christ's as much as the Father's, and the pardoning mercy the Father's as much as Christ's. It is a great step to get this fully and utterly recognized. It emancipates the Christian doctrine from the most revolting aspect of propitiatory sacrifice, as it is found all the world over and in the earlier stages of the Old Testament. And there is no doubt that the New Testament excludes it.

2. Secondly, we need to distinguish the ideas of vicarious sacrifice and vicarious punishment[3]; and I think we shall find that we can repudiate the second while we welcome the first. We can do this by appealing to the facts. All that came upon Christ in the way of suffering came simply from His life of obedience and sympathy. He never sought pain,[4] as if to witness pain would please the Father, or taught men to seek pain, except so far as service and self-discipline involve it. All that He suffered came simply out of His obedience to His Father's mission, and of His speaking the truth and rebuking sin; out of His standing stoutly against wickedness in high places, and out of His boundless sympathy with men. This constituted His mission. "He rode out because of the word of truth and meekness and righteousness." And as the world was, it brought Him to His death. There is not anything here which suggests any "punishment" devised

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[1] John iii 16; cf. 1 John iv 10, "Herein is love . . . that . . . God . . . sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

[2] Rom. viii 32.

[3] See Rashdall, *op. cit.* pp. 98–9, 151.

[4] Except in the minor form of the voluntary fast in the wilderness.

by the Father for the Son. All that is said of the Father is that He did not interfere to spare His son —that He let sin take its course, and show its real nature in this supreme example. The Father, in the divine providence that governs the world, made our sins—and the sins which crucified Christ were the normal sins of men—light upon Him, in exactly the same sense as all the world over the sins of men are vicariously borne by their victims—the sins of parents by their children, of children by their parents, of rulers by their people, and of people by their pastors. The Father simply sent the Son into the world, and under the normal action of its moral laws, and did not interfere.

There was a horrible story of that unhappy boy Edward VI having a whipping companion attached to him; and when the young king did wrong the child-companion was said to be vicariously, and doubtless very unwillingly, whipped. And divines were so misguided as to quote this outrageous instance of substituted punishment as an illustration of the Atonement. It fails as an illustration in two ways. The sacrifice of Christ was voluntary: it was *self* sacrifice: and there was no kind of "punishment" devised for Christ except what was involved in His doing right—in His obedience and His sympathy.

On the other hand there is a punishment for sinners, and it is of two kinds. There is the eternal punishment—that is, the alienation from God which sin involves and which has eternal consequences, and this Christ never bore. There is not the slightest trace of sin-consciousness in Christ; nor, as far as I can see—be it spoken with all reverence to Dr. Moberly—any trace of what can be called vicarious penitence. The Agony in the Garden has been viewed as if it were a shrinking from the experience of the Father's wrath upon the sins of men with which Christ was to be identified. But this is simply groundless imagination. Neither the Agony in the Garden nor the great question upon the Cross appears to suggest any consciousness on our Lord's part of being identified with human sin. Purely and simply they suggest the agony of a righteous soul—conscious as neither Job nor the Psalmist could be of perfect innocence—finding itself, in a world which it knows to be God's world, exposed to ignominy, failure, outrage, and death, while God remains silent and does nothing. That Christ should have asked the great question—"My God, my God, why didst thou forsake me?"—and received no answer is, for all who feel the like trial in whatever degree, a cause of profoundest thankfulness. But I cannot see any reason for believing that He experienced in His spirit the sense of the Father's alienation from the sinner.

This spiritual and eternal penalty of sin is gone at once as soon as the sin is gone out of the soul. And, as far as we can see, Christ not being a sinner did not bear it. There is another penalty of sin—the temporal punishment which wrongdoing brings with it, and from this, as far as we can see, Christ does not deliver us. Our absolution does not necessarily or usually ward off from us any of the natural consequences of our repented sins. Only it gives us the right spirit in which to bear them, and it turns them into healing penances. To be absolved is not to be let off. "Heard, forgiven, punished" was the record of God's dealings with His saints under the Old Covenant, and it is the record of His dealings with us under the New.[1]

Thus, as far as I can discern, there is in the case of Christ nothing which can be called vicarious punishment, nothing which was inflicted upon Christ instead of us. The doom on unrepented sin remains and the healing chastisement for repented sin remains.

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[1] Ps. xcix 8.

Christ's sacrifice purchased for us forgiveness—that is all we are told—in the sense that it enabled the flood of the Father's mercy to flow freely in the channels of the New Covenant. Why such a sacrifice should have been needful for such an end to be attained we shall consider directly.

3. Lastly it has been an abundant source of scandal that the Atonement—" Christ for us," acting in our stead—has been isolated from " Christ in us," renewing and recreating our characters. It is noticeable how, in St. Paul's teaching, faith in Christ, our atonement, merges itself, even in the Epistle to the Romans, and much more in his later Epistles, in the faith which appropriates and lives in His life. " Christ for us "—our sacrifice of reconciliation—gives us our fresh start, but it is but the prelude to "Christ in us." Our absolution is simply what gives us our admission into the new life. " I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou hast set my heart at liberty." Again and again in the New Testament the effect of the atoning sacrifice is stated in terms of actual righteousness, because this is its only purpose. " How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, cleanse your consciences from dead works to serve the living God ?" What you were redeemed from " with the precious blood . . . of Christ " was " your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers." " Thou wast slain and didst purchase to God by thy blood men of every tribe, etc., and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests ; and they reign upon the earth." (The consecrated life is the end and effect of atonement.) " His own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness." This is the language and purport of the whole New Testament.

There are, in fact, three relations in which our Lord stands to us in the New Testament. There is *Christ in front of us*, who sets before us the standard of the new life—in whom we see the true meaning of manhood. That is to kindle our desire. Then there is *Christ for us*—our propitiation or atonement—winning for us, at the price of His blood-shedding, freedom from all the guilt and bondage of the past, the assurance of free forgiveness and the fresh start. Then there is *Christ in us*—our new life by the Spirit, moulding us inwardly into His likeness, and conforming us to His character. And the three are one. Each is unintelligible without the others. The redeeming work of Christ lies in all together. We may dwell now on one and now on the other, but we can never really isolate one from the others without altogether distorting the meaning even of the one.

III

We have been at pains, by reviewing the New Testament, to understand how central and essential to the Gospel it announces is the conception of the Atonement with God won for us by the sacrifice of Christ. And we have laboured to disencumber the idea of His Atonement of scandals which have been suffered needlessly to disfigure it. Now let us contemplate it in its legitimate outline, and see whether it commends itself to our conscience and our reason.

Christ stands as the Inaugurator of the New Manhood, perfect and complete in the midst of our sin-stained and weakened race. He sets the perfect standard of human life while He is on earth, so that none henceforth can doubt what perfect manhood means, and from the heavenly places to which He has passed He supplies the power of the Spirit that men may have wisdom and strength to live the good life according to His example. But between the example and the outpouring of the Spirit there stands intermediate another mode of action on our behalf. As the New Man, on behalf of all those who shall give themselves to His allegiance, He offers to the Father a great act of reparation—the sacrifice of obedience consummated in blood and agony upon the cross. Over against all our selfishness, our impurity, our dishonouring of God, He makes that great act of reparation; and in virtue of it the Father bestows upon all those who, by faith and incorporation, are united to Him a new standing ground in His presence, and the gift of free forgiveness ever renewable, so that their past sins are no longer reckoned against them, the guilt and the burden of them is gone, and they can run the way of God's commandments unimpeded, seeing He has set their hearts at liberty.

Even here in this sacrificial action we must not isolate Christ from His people. To present ourselves to God, in soul and body, as a free-will offering is *our* reasonable service, and it is the law of humanity that sacrifice is vicarious as well as individual. We suffer for one another and redeem one another by suffering. St. Paul dares to speak of " filling up in his flesh that which is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for his body's sake, which is the church." And the New Testament constantly speaks of the Cross as our example as well as our propitiation. Nevertheless, as in all that concerns the relation of Christ to His people, that which in us is dependent and imitative, in Him is original and creative. His sacrifice won for His new humanity a boon to which they contributed nothing, which they must receive from Him or in His name simply and solely by faith, the boon of being forgiven; and over all their imperfect strivings and sacrifices that one full perfect and sufficient sacrifice abides—perpetually pleaded

—to give adequacy to what is imperfect and expiate what is sinful.

Christ we believe was one in nature with the Father. His self-sacrificing love is God's love. Why then we ask should God have needed this expiation? Why should not free forgiveness have simply been announced as a word of God? Or, to put it otherwise, if obedience, under the conditions of the sinful world, involved death, and all that Christ gave was obedience even to the point of dying at the hands of men, why should it have assigned to it this propitiatory or expiatory value? So far as we can find an answer to this question at all, we can find it perhaps best on this line—we can reflect how our thought of God would have suffered, if the great act of reparation had not been made by our Representative, acting on our behalf, doing *for* us what we could not do for ourselves. We should have been without that sense, which nothing has conveyed to the conscience of men like the sacrifice of the Cross, of the outrage which sin is upon the majesty of God, as measured by the price which it cost to redeem us. The gift of free forgiveness, the freedom of a fresh start, was not simply given us by God, but bought for us at a great price. This, I suppose, lies at the heart of that rather obscure phrase of St. Paul's—which is the only passage in the New Testament which even suggests the need of an explanation of the Atonement—where he contrasts "the passing over of sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God" with the great act, at the crisis of redemption, when God "set forth Christ Jesus" upon the great stage of the world "as a propitiation taking effect in his bloodshedding, to be made available for us by faith, for the exhibition of his righteousness at the present season that he might be just (righteous) and the justifier (or acquitter) of him that hath faith in Jesus." Divine righteousness can now show itself freely as mercy, because man, in Christ Jesus, has on the great scene of the world made the perfect act of reparation and borne the uttermost witness to the sovereignty of God by obedience unto death.

Is there not an immense difference between the effect upon men's minds of a mere announcement of free forgiveness and the effect upon them of a covenant of free forgiveness bought at so tremendous a price as the death of the Son of God? The reason for the fearful price being paid to win forgiveness seems to be found rightly by St. Paul in the necessity for guarding the revelation of the divine mercy from all associations of easy-going indulgence or indifference to sin. It was guarded by the Sacrifice; and it was God Himself who paid the price.

NOTE A

Dr. Rashdall's "*Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*"

This is a most learned and instructive work, for which every student must be grateful. But it seems to me, in some very important respects, extraordinarily arbitrary. Thus Dr. Rashdall rightly notes (p. 75 ff.) that the doctrine of the Atonement wrought by Christ's sacrifice is not due to St. Paul. "That view is rendered absolutely impossible by a single sentence in one of the practically undisputed Epistles of St. Paul himself, 'I delivered unto you . . . that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.' The belief that in some sense Christ died for sin—in order that sin might be forgiven and removed—was thus quite certainly part of what St. Paul received. It was already an article of the Church's traditional creed when the apostle of the Gentiles was baptized into it." Cf. also p. 104: "That God had forgiven sins through Christ, and pre-eminently through His death, was common ground between himself (St. Paul) and his opponents. It was part of the common faith of the Church." But (very arbitrarily, I think) Dr.

Rashdall is disposed to deny that the tradition was due to our Lord's own teaching. He thinks that the idea "resulted from the reflection of the Church in the interval which elapsed between the Crucifixion and St. Paul's conversion—which cannot have been more than a very few years" (p. 76). It was accepted "simply and solely on authority" (pp. 80, 82)—the authority of the Old Testament scripture. "They found it, as they thought, distinctly foretold that He should do so (die that sins might be forgiven), in books which they regarded as in the most literal and plenary sense inspired writing. In that fact I believe we can discover the historical origin of the atonement doctrine" (p. 78). But there is no passage which would have suggested the doctrine at all obviously except Is. liii; and that our Lord identified Himself with the Suffering Servant of this passage seems to me to be manifest (see above, p. 357). And the two great words of our Lord about the sacrificial value of His death, which are referred to above, both are grounded on this passage. This alone accounts for the undisputed position of the Atonement doctrine from the first.

I think that one great omission which is conspicuous in Dr. Rashdall's conception of Christ is—what is involved in His being the Christ—that He came to inaugurate the new Israel, and that He acts accordingly as the representative before God of the Church of the believers in Him which is yet to be—which by His death and resurrection and the coming of the Spirit He is to bring into effective being, and which is to be the old Church reformed on a new basis, on the basis of a new covenant by sacrifice.

NOTE B

Two phrases of St. Paul which have been needlessly misinterpreted (see p. 587).

(*a*) 2 Cor. v 21, "Him who knew no sin, he made to be sin on our behalf." I believe that "sin" here is the equivalent of "for sin" in Rom. viii 3 ("an offering for sin," R.V.). In the LXX, following the

Hebrew, the same word stands for sin and sin-offering (*ἁμαρτία*, translating *chattath*). Thus Lev. iv 21, " It [the bullock] is the sin, *i.e.* the sin-offering, of the assembly " ; 24, " It [the goat] is a sin " ; 29, " He shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin " ; vi 25, " This is the law of the sin," *i.e.* sin-offering ; viii 14, " The bullock is the sin " ; cf. Hosea iv 8, " They feed on the sin." St. Paul means, I think, simply that " God made him who knew no sin to be the sin-offering on our behalf."

(*b*) Gal. iii 13, " Having become a curse for us." The argument is—Those who struggle in their own strength under the law end under condemnation or a curse. There is a better way—not of saving ourselves, but of being saved. Fruitful faith in Jesus can do what fruitless struggle cannot. He brought us out from under the curse by His self-sacrifice. He was made a curse for us, *i.e.* treated as a malefactor, that we might not have to be treated as malefactors. We note that St. Paul is quoting a text of the Old Testament, Deut. xxi 23, which is " Cursed of God is everyone that hangeth upon a tree [gibbet]," but he leaves out the words " of God." It was the world, not God, which treated Christ as a malefactor.

CHAPTER XI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

THERE are, no doubt, other ideas and principles which the doctrine of the Incarnation implies, and which might fall to be considered here. Thus the affirmation of *the Word made Flesh* involves, as against all the tendencies of Hellenism, the dignity of matter and of the material world, which indeed is implied alike in the Christian idea of creation, of sin, of the Incarnation, of the Church and the sacraments, of the resurrection of the body and the redemption of the whole creation. But we will defer the consideration of this principle until the sacraments and the resurrection of the body have been discussed in the next volume. Again, we have found ourselves close up against the question of Authority as involved in the idea of a divine message or revelation, but that again shall be deferred for discussion in connection with the Church. Once more we shall probably have been led already to feel the coherence of the various elements of the traditional faith which centres in Christ, and this solidarity of "the articles of the faith" has over against it in our days a like solidarity in the sequence of ideas which are grouped as "Modernism." A certain philosophy appears to lie behind each sequence of ideas. But again we shall be able to bring this out more effectively when the whole cycle of rival ideas has been passed in review. So at this point we will summarize our argument and draw it to a conclusion.

Starting from the Jewish background, whence the first disciples started in the company of Jesus—the background of the distinctively Jewish belief in God and the expectation of the Messiah and his kingdom[1]—we observed how profoundly Jesus transformed the Jewish expectation, as His contemporaries held it, even while He accepted the title of Messiah—turning His back on political and nationalist ideals, and building up, out of the materials of prophecy, one profoundly unified and spiritual conception of the Christ, manifested, suffering, dying, rising, glorified, and to come in judgment. And we noted how, quite apart from any question of names and titles, by the unexampled spiritual authority which He wielded, He absorbed the attention, the faith, the devotion of His disciples, so that He came to be as God to their souls. This is the feature in the Gospel story which overwhelms us as we read it. But contrary to this deepening attraction of His person, and pulling in the opposite direction, there was the horror of the impending Cross, and the overthrow which it involved of all that had been associated with the Christ and his triumph.[2] We watched the tragedy of the disciples' failure under the strain of these contending feelings, and then their recovery under the experience of the Resurrection and the Ascension and the effusion of the Spirit. But still we noted that all their faith centred on the risen and glorified Lord, the man whom they had known, full of the Spirit and power, whom they had deserted, whom they had seen crucified, now exalted to the throne of God, who had sent thence upon them the Holy Spirit. It would have seemed as if they were on their way to deify their human Master after the Greek manner. But that could not be.

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[1] Cap. i, p. 297.

[2] Cap. ii, p. 330.

In the providence of God it was the bitterest of their opponents who was to interpret to them the meaning of their faith. This Saul—in the days when, as he said, he was "thinking with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth,"[1] and was "punishing his disciples ofttimes in every city and compelling them to blaspheme"—must have known a good deal about Jesus. Doubtless he learned more after his conversion, at Damascus and Jerusalem, about "the tradition" of the Christian society. But he was certainly convinced that it was nothing less than the action of God in his own soul that had "revealed his Son" in him; and this—the Divine Sonship—becomes the keynote of his teaching about Jesus. The man born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who after living and dying as man had been exalted to the divine glory and to the supreme Lordship—before He was born of a woman to His human condition, aye, before ever the world was, was the proper Son of God, a Son with His Father, through whom all things were made and in whom all things have their consistency. This is the doctrine of the Incarnation. And we noted that this doctrine, which interprets the person and glory of the ascended Jesus upon the background of Jewish monotheism as the coming of God's own Son in the flesh, and not the deification of a man, seems to have been without controversy accepted throughout the churches.[2] There is, as we saw, no Adoptionism, properly so called, to be found in the New Testament. And we discovered in the Synoptic records of Jesus several solemn sayings which are most certainly original and which can only be interpreted in the sense of a transcendental, superhuman Sonship. They do not differ in real implication from the more emphatic utterances about pre-existent Sonship ascribed to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. That Jesus so spoke must have been on record in the tradition of the Church, though the force of His words had not been generally realized till St. Paul brought it home to the other apostles in its full force. So only can we account for his doctrine of Incarnation coming so easily into general acceptance.

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[1] Acts xxvi. 9.

[2] Cap. iii, p. 366.

We analyzed the substantially identical doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son or "Word" of God in St. Paul, in the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in St. John. Besides the words of Jesus Himself, we found the materials for the conception of these first expositors of the person of our Lord in the Jewish phrases "the Word," and "the Wisdom," and "the Abiding Place" of God—phrases expressive of God as He manifests Himself in nature or amongst His people—much more obviously than in any purely Hellenistic sources. But it is to be remembered that Hellenism had already influenced the Jewish tradition, especially at Alexandria, as in the Book of Wisdom; and the Epistle to the Hebrews at least is an Alexandrian book.[1]

If the Hellenistic influence on Christian origins has been much exaggerated by one school of critics, so by another school of critics has the influence of the later Jewish Apocalypses. This was our conclusion when we examined the eschatological and apocalyptic teaching of Jesus and noted its complex character and originality. That our Lord was an apocalyptic seer there is no doubt, but He profoundly transmuted the apocalyptic tradition in adopting it. On the whole, He approximates far more closely in teaching to the prophets than to the later writers of Apocalypses. In particular, we saw no good reason for supposing that He prophesied the immediate coming of the end of the world. On the contrary, He appears to have declared explicitly that He had no map of the future spread before His eyes.[1]

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[1] Cap. iv, p. 402.

Having thus reviewed the thought of the New Testament about Christ, we contrasted its doctrine, which is the traditional doctrine, about His person with the most striking and distinctive modern views, all of a humanitarian and rationalistic type, which have claimed the name of critical reconstructions, and found them not truly critical, in that they are strangely arbitrary in what they accept and what they reject, and even violently contrary in their results. We saw reason to claim that the traditional faith—modified, in view of really critical requirements, but substantially unchanged—is alone able to account for the facts as a whole, the facts of the Gospel story and the convictions of the first disciples, by which alone the origin of the Christian Church can be explained. And we considered the most important types of objection which are made to the traditional doctrine.[2]

Then we studied the later development of the doctrine of Christ's person in outline, and came to the conclusion that the decisions of the Councils, which fixed the doctrine in dogmatic limits, were all of them necessary and justified in their negative aspects, considered as excluding types of teaching fundamentally destructive of the Christian faith; but that they were open to great abuse when they were made the positive basis on which a picture of a Christ was erected, in some points strangely unlike the picture in the Gospels. We felt the need of insisting that, while the decrees were necessary as hedges or safeguards of the fundamental faith of the New Testament, they should be understood to direct us to the Christ of the Gospels as giving us the positive image, and to the apostolic writers as giving us the positive interpretation, of His person.[1]

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[1] Cap. v, p. 432.

[2] Cap. vi, p. 458.

Then we proceeded to consider the main ideas and doctrines which the Incarnation doctrine of the New Testament is found to involve; and first the doctrine of the trinity of "persons" in the unity of God, the sense of which gradually became distinct in the process of experience which the Gospels record, by which the Name of God became to the disciples the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and we took note of the profound assistance which the reason finds in this conception of the one divine being as not a monotonous unit, but containing within Himself relationships which human language at least can only describe as a fellowship of persons.[2]

Next we examined the presupposition of all the Biblical accounts of Redemption, viz. that man is universally sinful and that, in order to realize the end of his being in fellowship with God and fellowship amongst men, he needs something much more than enlightenment. He needs such a fundamental recreation and renewal as involves the direct action of the God who made him. He must be saved. He cannot save himself. And we examined in outline the meaning of the doctrine of "original (or racial) sin," and found it justified or rather required by the essentially corporate and racial basis of human personality.[3]

Finally we found the idea of Atonement or Propitiation made by Christ before God, on behalf of the New Humanity which He came to inaugurate, to be an idea which the writers of the New Testament and the Church from the beginning assumed for true. We found that it clearly depends upon Christ's own testimony. We endeavoured to rid it of scandals in which, in the current tradition of the Church, it has become too plentifully involved; and thus purged, and presented in its original outline, we found it free from the moral objections which have been urged against it, and deeply responsive to the moral reason, which demands reparation to evoke and justify forgiveness; and we saw that its intellectual justification is inseparable from that estimate of Christ's person which sees in Him the representative head of a new humanity, who can act for His "members."[1]

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[1] Cap. vii, p. 492. [2] Cap. viii, p. 527. [3] Cap. ix, p. 552.

II

In all this process of observing and thinking we have found no justification for certain opinions which are commonly held and propounded as critical, viz. (1) that the theology of St. Paul and St. John, which is with little difference the theology of the Catholic Church, overlays and obscures the naive theology, if so it is to be called, of the historical Jesus. In any case you cannot get behind the apostolic witness. The Epistles are, as a whole, somewhat older than the Gospels as we have them, and the earliest Gospel records grew up in the heart of the Church which the Acts and the Epistles disclose to us. But also in these earliest records we discern a person who cannot be reduced to merely human proportions. The picture of Him, which we feel compelled to take for history and not for invention, is the picture of the superhuman Son of God. It justifies and requires the theology of St. Paul and St. John.

(2) We have seen no justification for asserting any determining influence of Hellenistic ideas upon the *origins* of Christianity, upon the Christianity of the New Testament. It is true that it had a much greater and deeper influence upon its development, which we shall have to consider in connection

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[1] Cap. x, p. 576.

with the sacramental system of the Church. But it had little influence on its origins, save in so far as it had already influenced Alexandrian Judaism in such a way as the Book of Wisdom represents. Like Christianity, so Judaism showed a marked power at different periods to assimilate foreign elements—from Babylonia and Persia and Greece—and to incorporate them into its own proper tradition in a discriminating spirit which never suffered the essential character of its own doctrine to be impaired or obscured. These elements had come to belong to Judaism before Christ was born. They belong to His background. But they were not considerable. It is substantially only the religion of the prophets and the person and teaching of Jesus which provide the materials of New Testament Christianity.

(3) Nor have we found justification for the exaggerated importance which a good many distinguished teachers ascribe to the Jewish apocalypses, and especially to the Similitudes of the Book of Enoch. We found no trace in the New Testament of the idea of the *Pre-existing Son of Man*, who is neither properly divine nor properly human. I suppose no one believes that such a being ever really existed. He is purely mythical; and it is astonishing how large an influence even some orthodox theologians seem to allow to this mythical figure, without recognizing that the superstructure of orthodox theology is immensely weakened if myth enters so largely into its foundations. But in fact the conception does not really appear in the New Testament. It is gratuitous to imagine it.[1]

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[1] The only sentence which really at first sight suggests it is John v 27, "He gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man." This sounds like the Similitudes of Enoch. But it is impossible to ascribe the idea of a pre-existing *Son of Man* to John. He explains his theology in his preface, and it appears constantly in his Gospel, and there is no room for it. It is the Word or Son of God who pre-exists. But He has become Son of Man.

III

Not indeed in New Testament times, but in the succeeding ages of the Church, especially when intellectual life has been keen, the doctrine of the person of Christ has been the centre of bitter controversy, and this controversy has undoubtedly distracted the attention of the Church from what ought always to be its main interest—the following "the way," the living the life, the maintenance of the moral, social witness. The religion of Christ, as He taught it, was to be, first of all, the way. The way was a hard way, and made a tremendous claim for sacrifice upon the heart and will of men. But for the men of good will it does not appear that our Lord intended the doctrinal claim to prove difficult. "If any man willeth to do God's will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God."[1] But the gravest scandal which Church history presents to many of the best men is that again and again in East and West, among Catholics and Protestants, they see a rigid, controversial, and often merciless insistence on doctrinal orthodoxy, coupled with manifest laxity of moral discipline. The situation in the Church has thus constantly presented features precisely contradictory to the apparent intention of Christ—that is to say, a concentration of interest on precise orthodoxy, coupled with a great readiness to "make it easy" in moral matters for those who are prepared to submit to the doctrinal authority of the Church, and to conform to its required practice. This, I cannot doubt, is the gravest of all the causes of scandal in the Church, and I cannot minimize it or apologize for it.[2]

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[1] John vii 17.

[2] I would venture to refer to my "Essex Hall Lecture," *Christianity applied to the Life of Men and Nations*, given by me in 1920, and published by the Lindsey Press, 5 Essex Street, Strand, London, W.C.

But when, in order to remove this scandal, men disparage theology they make a fundamental mistake. However many inconsistencies may be found in all ages between men's lives and their professed beliefs, there can be no question that, in the long run, how men behave will depend upon what they really believe about God and human nature and destiny ; and in particular that the Christian " way " depends for its motives and supports upon a specific doctrine about God and His love and His purposes for man, that is the doctrine of the Incarnation. " Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son." No one who has followed with any degree of sympathy the argument of this book will doubt that St. Paul and St. John were right in perceiving that the Gospel requires theological controversy, where necessary to defend a certain original and final doctrine on which it depends. " Though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." " Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God."[1] My last words in this volume shall be an attempt to set in a clear light the importance of maintaining (though never by methods of force) the doctrine about Christ of St. Paul and St. John.

I think the word which best sums up the importance of this Incarnation doctrine is *finality* or *uniqueness*. Let me quote the thoughtful language of Edwyn Bevan[2]:

" The great dividing line, it appears to me, is that which marks off all those who hold that the relation of Jesus to God—however they describe or formulate it—is of such a kind that it could not be repeated in any other individual—that to speak, in fact, of its being repeated in any *other* individual is a contradiction in terms, since any individual standing in that relation to God would *be* Jesus, and that Jesus, in virtue of this relation, has the same absolute claim upon all men's worship and loyalty as belongs to God. A persuasion of this sort of uniqueness attaching to Jesus seems to me the essential characteristic of what has actually in the field of human history been Christianity."

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[1] Gal. i 8–9, 2 John 9. [2] *Hellenism and Christianity*, p. 271.

Now it is to me evident that nothing but the doctrine of "the Word made flesh"—the doctrine of the Nicene Creed—can interpret or justify this uniqueness and finality ascribed to Christ. Dr. Kirsopp Lake has set before us the opposite estimate of the teaching of Jesus in human history, as contributory but as essentially neither final nor complete.[1] Dr. Lake is regarded as an "extremist." But my contention is, that no "mediating" doctrine, nothing except the full doctrine of the Nicene Creed, which is substantially identical with St. Paul's and St. John's, can either explain or justify the ascription to Jesus of finality and uniqueness in the strict sense. What I mean is this: if that doctrine is true, there is finality. No disclosure of God to man, such as is possible in this world, can be even conceived fuller or completer than is given in Him who is God incarnate—the Word made flesh. He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father. And no relation of man to God can be even conceived closer than in Him in whom the Manhood is taken into God. From Him, so conceived, proceeds necessarily the final and universal religion, for whatever elements of truth are found in the religions of the world, and whatever excellences in moral ideal, here, in Christ, is necessarily something more complete. And we cannot "look for another" Christ. There can be no other. That person, Jesus of Nazareth, is on the throne of the universe.

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[1] See the conclusion of his *Landmarks in the History of Early Christianity.*

On the other hand, no doctrine of Christ, less than this, can justify the claim of finality. If Jesus was a man who began His existence as a person when He was born of Mary—however close the union with God into which He was taken, however full the inspiration of the Spirit granted to Him—there can be no reason in the nature of things why another man, in a later age or in another country, and belonging to another tradition, should not be in the same relation to God and equally or more fully inspired. No form of adoptionist or Nestorian or generally humanitarian teaching can claim finality for its Christ.

It must be remembered that religion is a thing for common men. The refinements of the Antiochene school which lay behind Nestorianism were very subtle; but Nestorianism as vulgarly understood was their inevitable outcome. Common men can understand the doctrine of the Incarnation, and they can understand the doctrine of an inspired man. But I do not think it is open to question that so far as they came to hold the latter doctrine, though they might accept Christ as the best and most fully inspired man who has hitherto appeared among men, they would neither worship Him nor think Him the final revelation, nor His name the one name, nor His religion the religion for all mankind. I cannot conceive how this can be doubted.

Of course there are those who would say that the acceptance of the category of evolution in all departments of life, and in the regions of human religion and morality, renders the very idea of a final religion revealed two thousand years ago, and never to be antiquated, quite unacceptable. But I suppose that this objection is based upon a misconception about evolution which we are outgrowing. Evolution is as compatible with retrogression as with progress, as we were warned by

Huxley long ago. It must accommodate itself to the facts. The facts of human history suggest nothing at all like necessary or uniform progress. In the particular region of the history of religion this is especially the case. The highest level in the religion of Persia was attained in the teaching of Zoroaster, three thousand years ago. The highest level in Buddhism is indisputably the level of Siddartha Gotama. It would remain true, even if Christ were a mere man, that though in that case, no doubt, some successor *might* attain a higher level than He, yet in fact He still remained the highest ideal. And these considerations suffice, I think, to prevent our rejecting the idea of the incarnation of God in Christ, once for all, as if it could be repudiated in the name of evolution.

But there is another consideration perhaps more satisfactory. It is that though Christ is final—though He is on the throne of the world and His judgment the final judgment—though St. John can rightly claim of Christians that any "advance" which takes a Christian teacher outside or away from the "doctrine of Christ" is self-condemned—yet that Christ and the doctrine of Christ is so rich and manifold that it will take all races and all ages and all sorts of individual characters to realize all that it involves. That is an idea suggested to us by both St. Paul and St. John: By St. Paul when he bids us see the whole development of the Church catholic as the sphere in which Christ is to be gradually fulfilled: by St. John when he recalls to us that the function of the Spirit is to lead the Church into "all the truth." No doubt this is an often misinterpreted text. It needs to be coupled with the two neighbouring texts where our Lord speaks to the disciples of the Holy Spirit as "to bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you" and "to glorify me: for he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you." The function of the Spirit is to interpret Christ and not to supersede Him. Nevertheless there is so much to be brought out and interpreted that we are constantly feeling we have only made a beginning of understanding Him, and that as Jew and Greek and Roman and Frenchman and Englishman and German have contributed, so will Indian and Chinese and Japanese. It will take all mankind to understand Him in whom dwells all the fulness of God bodily.

The ascension of Jesus is the symbol of His finality. He passed to the throne of the world. He is to come to judge the quick and dead. His judgment on all men and things is to be the final judgment. But the Ascension, though it is in this sense the great end and there can be no higher summit, yet in another most manifest sense is a fresh beginning. It is but the establishment upon His secure throne of Him who is to be the source of redemption for all men : who by His Spirit is to work throughout the world of men until all men have heard His Gospel in effective power and the kingdoms of the world can become the kingdoms of God and of His Christ.

So understood Christianity is indeed the religion of development or unfolding—the gradual unfolding of all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are in Christ.

NOTE ON THE ASCENSION

There is an idea current that the articles of the Creed, "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead" depended upon the old Ptolemaic astronomy which rendered possible a belief in a heaven above our heads; and that the disappearance of this theory has invalidated this group of beliefs connected with the Ascension. The same is said to be true of the belief in the descent into hell. Thus Dr. Glazebrook says: "The clauses have no literal meaning except for those who regard the earth as a fixed centre of creation, with a hollow space underneath for Hades and a solid vault overhead." And Dr. Streeter, "The Ascension implies the belief that heaven is a definite region locally fixed above the solid bowl of the skies."

But it is a mistake to suppose that all intelligent Christians of the early ages held such ideas. Plato had taught the intelligent world of the Greco-Roman Empire by his myths to accept the principle that about "the other world" or other worlds we can be taught for the most part only in figure or allegory. This idea was widely diffused and Alexandrian Judaism gave it additional vogue. There is no doubt that ideas about heaven and hell such as Dr. Glazebrook and Dr. Streeter refer to did prevail in the world of the first centuries, outside the Church and inside it. But it is not the case that they were universal. I doubt whether St. Paul held any such ideas. When he speaks of Christians being now with Christ "in the heavenlies" or heavenly sphere,[1] he cannot have been thinking of it as a defined locality. When he speaks of "being caught up into the third heaven" I suspect he knew quite well that he was speaking in a figure, as one who sees but a blurred reflection in a mirror, or apprehends but in a riddle.[2] Nor is it the least probable that when the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of our Lord as having passed through the heavens into the true tabernacle[3] he was forgetting what he had learned from his Alexandrian teachers, that earthly things are only "figures" or "shadows" of eternal realities.[4] No one would be disposed to ascribe materialistic ideas of heaven to Clement and Origen. But it is more surprising to find Jerome, when he is interpreting "foolish speaking" (on Eph. v 4),[5] giving it as an example of such nonsense that Christians dare to say "that heaven is curved like an arch, and that a throne is placed in heaven, and that God sits upon it, and that, as if He were a commander or judge, the angels stand round to obey His commands and to be sent on different missions." Plainly for Jerome the truth and meaning of the Ascension did not depend upon such "nonsense."

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[1] Eph. i 3, ii 6.

[2] 1 Cor. xiii 12.

[3] iv 14, viii 2.

[4] ix 23, x 1.

[5] *P.L.* xxvi 519 f. Dr. Harris, *Creeds or no Creeds*, called my attention to this quotation.

Again the Fathers are many of them at pains to explain that "He sitteth at the right hand of God" was certainly figurative, seeing that God has no right hand.

Lastly as regards Hades, whether it holds some special position, as a part of or in relation to the earth, there was a good deal of discussion in many circles and among Christians in early times. There again it is hard to believe that when St. Paul speaks of the dead as "sleeping in Jesus" he was thinking of a pit underground. There is a long and interesting discussion of the matter in Gregory of Nyssa's *de Anima et Resurrectione*, where he seems to follow Posidonius the Platonizing Stoic; and he reaches the conclusion "that the soul, being immaterial, is under no necessity to be detained in certain portions of nature." Hades he explains to mean "the invisible" (τὸ ἀειδὲς), and "to go to Hades" the translation of the soul into the invisible.

I am not disputing the wide prevalence of merely physical conceptions of heaven and hell such as Copernican astronomy must have utterly overthrown. I am only pleading that, even when no one doubted the Ptolemaic astronomy, intelligent Christians did not fail to see that heaven and hell were not spatial terms.

I have in *Belief in God* (pp. 272–273) spoken about the Ascension of Christ as a physical fact which the apostles saw, and of its spiritual significance, quite irrespective of changes in our conception of the structure of the universe; and (pp. 180–182) I have endeavoured to show how illogical and unreasonable it is to argue that because *in the case of what lies outside possible human experience* we must be taught by symbols, therefore we can apply the same symbolic interpretation to events, such as the miracles connected with our Lord's person, which are stated to have occurred *within human experience* and have all their significance from having so actually occurred.

BOOK III. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

CHAPTER I

THE RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

We are to-day constantly being told, and quite truly, that what we need to make our religion more real, more full of power, and more attractive, is a deeper apprehension of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit of God. This call for "the religion of the Spirit" comes from many quarters. Thus Pope Leo XIII, in his Encyclical *Divinum illud munus* of 1897,[1] expressed his bitter regret that Christians have but a very meagre knowledge of the Holy Spirit. "They often use His name in their exercises of piety, but their faith is surrounded with dense darkness"; and he charges all preachers and those who have charge of souls to regard it as a duty to teach their people "more diligently and more richly" on what concerns the Holy Spirit, so that the lamentable "ignorance of these great and fruitful mysteries may be completely banished." Similar lamentations and exhortations come to us from quite opposite quarters; and to feel how much they are needed we have only to realize that the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the meaning and consequences of the gift, constitute one at least of the dominant themes of the New Testament. If you had asked an original disciple in Jerusalem, or one of the members of the Churches founded by St. Paul, what it was to be a Christian, you would probably have got one of two answers: either that 'it is to confess that Jesus is Lord' or that 'it is to have received the Spirit.'

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[1] The teaching of the encyclical is summarized in Cavallera's *Thesaurus Doctrinae Cath.*, pp. 288 ff. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1920). The references in the text above are taken from Marmion (the Abbot of Maredsous), *Le Christ Vie de l'Ame,* p. 125 (Paris: Desclée, de Brouwer et Cie, 1923). The Abbot Marmion himself uses what, judging from our experience in England, I should have ventured to hope was exaggerated language about the prevailing ignorance of the Holy Spirit: "Combien pourtant de chrétiens d'aujourd'hui qui ne le connaissent que de nom et ne savent presque rien de ses opérations dans les âmes."

And up to a certain point there is a more or less general agreement among seriously religious people as to the meaning of life in the Spirit. It is to be possessed, and feel ourselves to be possessed, by an inward power and presence greater than ourselves, a power and presence which we acknowledge to be God working in us, to give us spiritual enlightenment as to the purpose of life, and the knowledge of Himself, and personal guidance, and power to control our passions, and the pre-eminent gift of love.

So far there is not much difference among us. But when you pass from the practical consideration of "the fruit of the Spirit" as seen in the individual, to the consideration of the methods by which this Divine Spirit works, and the conditions under which His presence is to be looked for and relied upon, the differences between what I may call the 'modern' and the Scriptural point of view become somewhat startling.

I

Since the day when Hegel wrote about the philosophy of spirit, and gave a great impulse to the comparative study of religions, what has been meant commonly in intellectual circles by a Religion of the Spirit is fairly evident, and I will seek to describe it.

1. The comparative study of religions has led us

to entertain the idea of religion as in all its phases and varieties essentially one. Everywhere we find the human spirit becoming conscious of its relation to something vaster than itself—to something divine—which at last is conceived of as one and universal. By the human 'spirit' which has become awakened to fellowship with the universal spirit is meant something more than understanding or intellect. Spirit involves intelligence, but it is in feeling and conation, even more than in intelligence, that this "sense sublime" is awakened and sustained. And it is this awakening and growth of spirit which, broadly, is what is meant by religion. The fascination of such a book as *The Golden Bough* is that, surveying the rude and savage origins of religions all the world over, it makes us feel that mankind is one, and his religion one in essence, all the way up from its crudest to its most exalted forms. Throughout the whole process there is an awakening and realizing within the man of his fellowship with divine spirit. This is the religion of spirit as we moderns like to conceive it.[1]

This general idea of the religion of spirit may take a more pantheistic form, as when the conception suggested is that of an impersonal spirit of the universe coming to the consciousness of itself in man; or a more theistic form, as when the conception is that of a personal God, who is spirit, disclosing Himself and imparting Himself to man, more or less in all countries and through all phases of his civilization[2]; but whether the religion of spirit is more pantheistically or more theistically conceived of, in either case it is of a universal process that we like to think, by which mankind everywhere, under all sorts of religious beliefs and institutions, becomes conscious of something which is already within him and only needs to be awakened, or something which is available for him individually, as a gift, without regard to any 'institution.'

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[1] I had a variety of books in view in writing the above. Perhaps I may refer to essays i, viii, ix, in the volume entitled *Spirit: God and His Relation to Man considered from the Standpoint of Philosophy, Psychology, and Art*, edited by Canon B. H. Streeter, with the motto "In him we live, and move, and have our being."

[2] In very modern days, as in the theology of Mr. H. G. Wells, it takes the form of asserting a fellowship of the human spirit with a spirit in the world which is striving for good, which is greater than man or the individual man, but is very far indeed from being universal or cosmic. On this, see *Belief in God*, pp. 47–8.

The process, it is acknowledged, may have moments of culmination. It may be acknowledged that it has so far found its climax in Jesus and the Christian religion. But essentially all religions represent one movement, and the truth or value of all alike is a question of more or less. There is no one absolutely true religion in contrast to a number of false ones. That ancient claim made alike by Judaism, Islam, and Christianity is a pretension which must be abandoned.[1] The religion which actually won Europe and is called Christianity owed almost as much to the Greek as to the Jew; and if India is to call itself Christian, its Christianity will, again, owe as much to India as to the Europe which evangelized it.

2. Thus the religion of spirit, as it is commonly conceived of in modern intellectual circles, though, as has been said, it can tolerate the idea of a relative culmination attained in the past, does not readily tolerate the idea of a final culmination once for all attained. It wants a continuous process of religious discovery by the absorption of new elements and the correction of the old. If it is prepared to express this as being "not the supersession but the interpretation of the Christ," yet it resents the idea of a standard of truth, whether about God or about man, expressed in written scriptures or credal forms of the past, which claim to lay their restraining hand upon modern developments of belief or modern reconstruc-

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[1] This feeling was much promoted by Lessing's famous drama *Nathan der Weise.*

tions of formulas and ideals.[1] "The letter killeth," we hear it said, but "the Spirit giveth life." The Spirit must be free to "lead us into all the truth,"[2] and we must expect to see the standards and formulas of the past, however venerable, superseded in the light of increasing knowledge, and the sacred books of the past read in a light their authors would not have recognized.

This idea of the fluidity of all the religions of history and the transitoriness of their specific forms is expressed in an uncompromising form by Dr. Kirsopp Lake in the opening paragraph of his *Landmarks in the History of Early Christianity*[3]:

> "At first sight the historian of religions appears to be faced by a number of clearly distinguished entities, to each of which he feels justified in giving the name of a separate religion; but on further consideration it becomes obvious that each one of these entities has been in a condition of flux throughout its history. Each began in a combination or synthesis of older forms of thought with comparatively little new in its composition; each ended by disintegrating into many elements, while the best were taken up into new life in some new religion. The movement was more marked at some times than at

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[1] See Auguste Sabatier's *The Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit* (Engl. trans., Williams & Norgate, 1909).

[2] These two texts, it should be remembered, are very frequently quoted in a sense alien to their original meaning. By the "letter that killeth" (2 Cor. iii. 6) St. Paul meant the law "written and engraven in stones," with its authoritative prohibitions, "thou shalt not." This was divinely given *to kill*, i.e. to make men conscious of their state of alienation from God, because of their inability to keep the law. Then only, when man had been duly "killed," i.e. made conscious of his inability and his need, the offer of redemption could be made and accepted, and the Spirit entering into the man could empower him and strengthen him to become actually righteous; cf. Rom. ii. 27–9, vii. 6. The phrase is not concerned at all with the relation of a religion of authority, "the letter," to a religion of individual inspiration, "the spirit." Again, "all the truth" into which the Spirit is to lead the disciples in St. John xvi. 13 is defined and explained in the context, xvi. 14; cf. xiv. 26. It is the truth as it is in Jesus.

[3] Macmillan, 1920.

others, and the differentiation of the various religions depends chiefly on the recognition of these moments of more rapid change. But the process never really stopped; from beginning to end new elements were constantly absorbed and old elements dropped. For religion lives through the death of religions. Nothing illustrates this so well as the history of Christianity, for no religion is so well known."

This is an extreme statement, to which perhaps few would completely assent. But the ideas of universality of process and continuous progress towards an unattained ideal are certainly the ideas which in modern literature are commonly associated with "the religion of the Spirit."

3. But there is also a more old-fashioned conception of the religion of the Spirit or of spiritual religion, associated with Protestantism throughout its history, which has still a very wide hold upon our English mind. It is that which puts what is spiritual into antithesis with what is external or material. Spiritual religion is still spoken of as if it were concerned only with the inward relation of the single soul with God, and as if anything which represented it as (so to speak) embodied, or in some way *annexed* to external rites or social institutions, were a derogation from its spirituality.

I have thought it well to call attention at starting to the ideas which seem to be preoccupying our minds when we use the phrase "the religion of spirit" or "a spiritual religion," because we need to be on our guard against entertaining prejudices which may turn out to be misleading, and deceiving ourselves by using Scriptural phrases in a sense quite different from what they were intended to bear. And what I am claiming of my readers is that they should make a determined effort, first of all, to consider the religion which in history has made the chief claim to be the religion of the Spirit—I mean, of course, the Christian religion—objectively and as it appears at its origin. It is a difficult thing to divest ourselves of prejudices and read the history of the past simply according to the intentions of those who were the actors in it. Let it be granted that it cannot be done perfectly. But the claim of historical criticism is that it can be done, if not perfectly yet with some measure of real effectiveness. Let us make a serious effort, then, first to examine the idea of the Spirit and of the religion of the Spirit, as it is suggested in the Old Testament and as it presents itself in full flood in the New, before we make any attempt to estimate its value and truth.

The first point that will strike us when we seek frankly to appreciate the Bible teaching about the Holy Spirit is that it speaks of it or Him not as something which men naturally possess and only need to realize, but as a gift given, so to speak, from outside and (especially in the New Testament) under definite and objective conditions.

II

The idea of spirit (breath, or wind) as the invisible principle of life, and the idea of spirits, that is, invisible but living beings good or bad, is, I suppose, approximately universal among men. But what specially distinguishes the Old Testament among ancient literatures is the development of the idea of the one Spirit of the living God—the Spirit of Jehovah or His Holy Spirit.[1]

As the Israelites came to believe in one only God, the living God, the Creator of all things, they spoke of His spirit or active energy as going forth into the whole creation. "The spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters." "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they [the creatures] are created ; and thou renewest the face of the ground." "Whither shall I go from thy spirit ?" "By his spirit the heavens are garnished." So particularly of man: "The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life." "The spirit of the Almighty giveth men understanding."[1] Also any remarkable gifts of individuals, the strength of Samson, the skill of Bezalel, are ascribed specially to the spirit of God.[2]

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[1] The teaching of Zoroaster about the good Spirit, which is very closely identified with God, if not identical, is very striking. But Zoroaster, it must be remembered, never clears himself from dualism.

So far, then, the spirit of God is universal in its action and, though a communicated influence, is in some sense necessary to the very being of a living creature. But the most characteristic idea of 'the holy spirit,' even in the Old Testament, is that which specially identifies it with the divine process of redemption, which, if it is ultimately to become universal, runs as yet exclusively through the channel of the chosen people, Israel. It is the prophets who are the special organs of the spirit, and, as the features of true prophetic inspiration become more and more distinct, the prophets appear as the instruments of a continuous self-revelation of God which is to reach its culmination in the days to come. To be the scene of this self-revelation is the special vocation of Israel. The spirit is of course an ethical influence, and as such is sometimes spoken of as given to all God's servants. Thus "Take not thy holy spirit from me" is the cry of the penitent heart. On the whole, however, it is thought of as the special endowment of the prophets, but to be expected in the future in its fullest richness in the person of the Messiah or the Servant of Jehovah, and then to be poured out on the whole of the redeemed Israel in the day of culmination, the day of the Lord.[1]

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[1] Gen. i. 2; Ps. civ. 30, cxxxix. 7; Job xxvi. 13, xxxiii. 4, xxxii. 8.

[2] Exod. xxxi. 3; Judg. xiii. 25, xiv. 6.

In the Book of Wisdom, which was written under Hellenistic influences, the spirit of God is practically identified with His (personified) wisdom, the operation of which is universal. Thus it is said, "The spirit of the Lord hath filled the world," and "Thine incorruptible spirit is in all things"; and when we read "From generation to generation passing into holy souls, she maketh men friends of God, and prophets,"[2] we wonder whether the author is not contemplating an inspiration beyond the limits of Israel. But nothing of this kind is suggested in the canonical books; and in the New Testament, to which we pass, it is very noticeable that while the idea is conveyed to us of a universal activity of God in nature and in the minds of men, the idea is associated with His Son or Word,[3] and not with the Spirit. The gift or activity of the Spirit is exclusively associated with Christ and the Church. Let us consider the facts, even though it involves a little repetition of what was said in the previous book.

The Jews of the latter days had come to believe that for many centuries there had been no inspired prophets among them; but a revival of prophecy was expected.[4] And the New Testament at once proclaims the revival in John, the son of Zacharias, who was "filled with holy spirit[1] even from his mother's womb." And his father Zacharias "was filled with holy spirit, and prophesied," and Simeon was "in the Spirit" when he recognized the Lord's Christ. Thus prophecy revives to herald the Christ. And Jesus is the perfect work of the Holy Spirit. He it is who quickens the germ of life in the womb of the virgin mother so that she conceived her son of the Holy Spirit. He it is who consecrates Him for His mission in the world at His baptism; Jesus leaves the place of His baptism "full of Holy Spirit" and was "led by the Spirit" to the wilderness of temptation. "In the power of the Spirit" He returns to Galilee, and in the synagogue at Nazareth applies to Himself the prophecy uttered concerning the servant of Jehovah, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me." "In the Spirit of God" He is said to cast out devils. So evident ought it to be to all men that there is in Him a victorious action of God over the spirits of evil, that to ascribe His powers to Satan is to "blaspheme against the Holy Spirit." His own inner life was lived in the Spirit: "He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit." St. Peter in the Acts summarizes the story of Jesus in the words "God anointed him with Holy Spirit and power: who went through the land doing good, and healing all who were being overpowered by the devil." After His resurrection His last injunctions were given to the apostles "through the Spirit."[2]

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[1] For the "holy spirit" as guiding the people as a whole, see Isa. lxiii. 10 ff., Hag. ii. 5, Zech. iv. 6, Nehem. ix. 20; for the Holy Spirit in the heart of the individual Israelite, Ps. li. 10 ff., cxliii. 10; for the Spirit in the Messiah, Isa. xi. 1, 2; in the servant of Jehovah, Isa. xlii. 1, lxi. 1; in the whole people in Messianic days, Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 24 ff., xxxvii. 14, xxxix. 29, Isa. xxxii. 15, xliv. 3, lix. 21, Zech. xii. 10, Joel ii. 28 ("all flesh" = all Israel of all ages and both sexes). See also p. 654, Note C.

[2] Wisd. i. 7, xii. 1, vii. 27, ix. 17.

[3] See below, p. 637. The only possible exception is in Rev. i. 4, where "the seven spirits which are before the throne of God" and "the seven spirits sent forth into all the earth" (iv. 5, v. 6) represent the universal activities of God. See Zech. iv. 10 and Swete, *in loc.*

[4] 1 Macc. iv. 46, ix. 27, 54, xiv. 41.

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[1] It cannot be maintained that, where there is no article used in the Greek, there the reference always is to the gift and not the person. For "Holy Spirit" without the article may be used as a proper name. But "the Holy Spirit" with the article always does refer to the person, and "holy spirit" without the article often = inspiration: see Robertson, *Grammar of the Gr. N.T.*, p. 756.

[2] In Heb. ix. 14 Christ is said to have offered Himself to God upon the cross in "eternal spirit." But this seems to refer not to the Holy Spirit specifically, but to the divine quality of His self-oblation.

This is the witness of the Synoptic Gospels and specially of St. Luke. In all of them John the Baptist is represented as bearing witness that His greater successor is to have power to do what he could not do, " to baptize with holy spirit."[1] There is very little said in any of the first three Gospels about the preparing of the disciples for this supreme gift.[2] But at the beginning of the Acts St. Luke represents the risen Lord as reminding the disciples about " the promise of the Father, which (said he) ye heard from me," and these particular words, as well as the atmosphere of expectation in the minds of the disciples, imply some such preparation of the disciples' minds as the Fourth Gospel records at length. There we have a plain statement that whereas in the future the believers were to receive the Spirit, yet during the ministry of Jesus on earth " Holy Spirit was not yet," because Jesus was not yet glorified.[3] And in the later discourses the disciples are assured that even the loss of Christ's visible companionship would be more than compensated by the greater gift of the Spirit, the " other helper," whom, after Jesus was gone out of their sight, He would send upon them, or the Father would send in His name, both to supply His absence and to accomplish His presence within them.

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[1] " And with fire " St. Luke adds (Luke iii. 16). But " and with fire " is omitted in Acts i. 5.

[2] See, however, Mark xiii. 11 and parallel passages, and Luke xi. 13.

[3] Recent writers in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. xxiv, Professor C. H. Turner (No. 93, pp. 66 ff.) and Mr. F. J. Badcock (No. 94, pp. 169 ff.), have been urging us to follow some ancient and modern authorities and to punctuate these verses (John vii. 37–9) so as to read thus: " If any one thirst let him come unto me, and let him drink that believeth on me; as the scripture has said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet (given), because Jesus was not yet glorified." So also Burney, *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 110. This must surely be right. Whatever the exact meaning of the reference to Scripture, it is plain that in the writer's mind the vessel of the Spirit, out of which it is to flow, is not the believer, but Christ.

The actual bestowal of the gift of the Spirit is described with great particularity, and with a profound sense of its importance, in the Acts. The bestowal is made upon the whole body of disciples[1] at a particular moment, with external signs accompanying its coming and proving its arrival within their souls and bodies. It takes possession of them and shakes the very foundation of their being. Henceforth as the Church expands it becomes the normal possession of each member of the new Israel, according to the prophecy. But it is bestowed on each as an objective gift following baptism, and the normal instrument of its bestowal appears to be the laying on of apostolic hands. The effect of the Holy Spirit within them is represented as a life of fellowship in which they are knit into one, joyfully inspired with courage and faith, guided and sanctified in their personal lives, corporately enlightened to make right decisions touching the development of the Church, and endowed with special gifts—"tongues" and prophecy and the working of signs and wonders.[2]

And the Church in which the Spirit is given appears as a body organized under officers. Renan spoke of "the divine institution of the hierarchy" as a "favourite thesis" of St. Luke and P. Sabatier speaks of "hierarchical pretensions" as characterizing the conciliar decree in the Acts.[1] I do not like either expression. But at least they have the advantage of recognizing a fact which many of our contemporaries are fond of ignoring—viz. the existence and recognition from the first (according to our records as they stand) of the authority of the apostles—not as witnesses only but as rulers—which was inherent in them from the first by Christ's appointment of them. St. Peter in his speech immediately after the Ascension speaks of a "ministry and apostleship" and (by a quotation from the Psalms) "overseership."[2] The special position of the apostles within the community is vividly represented in the text[3] "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they [the apostles] were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. But of the rest [of the disciples] durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the [Jewish] people magnified them; and believers were the more added to the Lord."

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[1] That, I think, is implied especially at ii. 17 f.

[2] Some critics are inclined to speak as if St. Luke was so much interested in the wonderful manifestations of the Spirit, such as tongues, prophesyings, and miraculous healings, as to have little or no perception of His permanent indwelling and its normal moral fruits. I do not doubt that St. Paul gives us a fuller theology of the Spirit (and of Christ) than St. Luke, who was not a theologian. But Luke certainly gives us a very vivid picture of the life of fellowship and love into which the Spirit bound the Church (ii. 42, 44–46, iv. 32), and of the joy and goodness of their common life. We should remember the phrase "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost" (xi. 24). Certainly "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness," are in the Acts "the fruit of the Spirit."

There were, it appears, from the beginning three bonds of unity for the Church: the common teaching—"the apostles' teaching" accepted as "the word of God"—and the sacramental rites which were the instruments of divine gifts—baptism and the laying on of hands and the breaking of the bread—and the ministry of the apostles, the later development of which under their authority we can more or less clearly discern. Upon these matters I shall have to return, and upon the contention of those who suggest that the picture in the Acts reads back upon the first beginnings of the Church what was in fact

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[1] Renan, *Les Apôtres*, p. xxxix; P. Sabatier, *La Didaché*, p. 155.

[2] Acts i. 17, 20, 25; see more in detail in chap. iv.

[3] Acts v. 12. See Rackham's note. For the meaning of "the rest" see Luke xxiv. 9, "The eleven and all the rest." κολλᾶσθαι, as in Acts ix. 26 (cf. 1 Macc. iii. 2, vi. 21), means to join oneself to others, as one of their number. The note on this passage in the new Clarendon Bible, *Acts*, p. 153, seems to me unsatisfactory.

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a somewhat later cycle of ideas. Here I am only insisting that, as the records stand, the gift of the Holy Ghost is in the Acts represented as a gift given, so to speak, objectively to a definite and visible society, claiming to be the true Israel, and to it, as far as appears, exclusively, and to individuals only as members of the society. To the reception of the Spirit there is no gate but baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus.[1] Even when the acceptableness of the Gentile Cornelius has been demonstrated by a manifest effusion of the Spirit upon him and his pious associates, still they are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.[2] Those at Ephesus who had been baptized by John's baptism, but had not heard that the Holy Ghost had been given, were baptized afresh in "the name of the Lord Jesus," and received the Holy Spirit with the laying on of St. Paul's hands. What is presented to us is the picture of a community of which the Holy Spirit is the animating presence. To lie to the apostles is to "lie to the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit guides all their movements and their development. They associate the Holy Spirit with themselves in their collective decision: "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us." It is the apostle who appoints the presbyters in a local Church, but he declares that it is "the Holy Spirit who has made them bishops." The total effect is that we recognize the gift of the Holy Spirit as a gift embodied in the Church.

When we turn from the Acts to St. Paul's Epistles, the picture is just the same. St. Paul loves individuality. He loves to recognize the variety of the Spirit's gifts. But there is no trace of any such individualism as would admit of his recognizing the Spirit as a gift belonging to or given to an individual apart from the body. There is no conception of any membership of Christ except by baptism, which is incorporation into "the body"—the Church. "By one Spirit were ye all baptized into one body." When he talks about the reception of the Spirit, he talks about it as a gift received at an assignable moment. "Received ye the Spirit," he asks, "by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?"[1] He is recalling to their minds a particular incident of their lives. Those, again, who have become Christians and received the Spirit are exhorted not to "grieve" the Spirit, or to "stir up the gift" they have received, or to yield themselves to "be filled with the Spirit," but never to *ask for* the Spirit. He has already become a permanent endowment of their life; and it is an endowment which they have received as "members" of the Body. Their union with Christ in the Spirit is indistinguishable from their union with the Church. Even more manifestly than in the Acts the Spirit in the Epistles of St. Paul is a spirit which has taken to himself a body, and thereby provided for Christ, whose Spirit He is, a visible organ and instrument in the world. The principle of unity in the body is the Spirit, which might be described as its soul: but there are necessary external conditions of union also, and they appear to be, as in the Acts, the acceptance of the common "teaching" or "tradition" or "faith"; and the sacraments of fellowship, baptism, and the eucharist; and the authority of the apostles, upon which, at the last resort, St. Paul, as will appear, is prepared to insist very strenuously.[2]

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[1] Acts ii. 38, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

[2] Acts x. 47.

And there is nothing in the Epistles other than St. Paul's to suggest that any other teacher of the Church would have hesitated to identify the gift of the Spirit with the fellowship of the Church.

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[1] Cf. Swete's *Holy Spirit in the New Testament*, pp. 202, 204, 215 (Macmillan).

[2] 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

III

We have now contrasted broadly two different views of the religion of the Spirit—that with which we are familiar in a great deal of the modern literature on the subject, which would represent it as universal in humanity, with that which is presented in the New Testament, where it appears that the gift of the Spirit is given only in the Church. At the same time we must not exaggerate the contrast. The modern view also is in part countenanced in the Old Testament and in the New. Thus it is the fundamental doctrine of the Bible that man was made in the image of God and after His likeness, and that there is a spirit in mankind everywhere, breathed into him by God, which responds, or may respond, to the offer of God. This is why the preachers of the Gospel can make their appeal to the universal conscience—" commending ourselves," as St. Paul says, " to every man's conscience in the sight of God."[1] It is everywhere in the Bible taken for granted that the good which men see in the disciples of Christ will appeal to them as responding to their best instincts—" that they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day that he shall visit them."[2] Thus Christians are not to despise human nature as it stands, but to " honour all men." Our Lord in the Gospels appreciates tenderly what we should call 'natural goodness,' even in trivial examples—" a cup of cold water only." There are men of faith outside the Kingdom who are already prepared to enter it.[3] So we hear of the Lord " having much people "[4] even in a singularly corrupt city like Corinth. And St. Paul appeals to natural virtue in the world at large as a fit subject for the contemplation of the disciples of Christ—" if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise."[1] He also, in spite of his strong conviction of human corruption, believes in the natural conscience, individual and social, and speaks of some men who know not the law, that is are Gentiles, as "doing by nature the things of the law."[2] He thinks, that is, of the law of Sinai, like the Schoolmen, as being the republication of the original law of nature, never quite obliterated in men's consciences.

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[1] 2 Cor. iv. 2.

[2] 1 Pet. ii. 12.

[3] Matt. viii. 11.

[4] Acts xviii. 10.

Moreover, it is the function of the natural reason and conscience in all men everywhere to "seek God, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being; for as certain Stoic poets said, We are also his offspring."[3] All this is a recognition of spirit in man in the modern sense, and of a movement of God towards man everywhere, and of a universal presence of God in nature; only in the New Testament, in which the Son or Word of God is distinguished from the Spirit, this movement of God towards all men and in all men, and in nature as a whole, is ascribed not to the Holy Spirit, but to the Son, or Word. "The life," i.e. the life of the Word, "was the light of man." He (the true light), who was coming into the world (in His incarnation), was all along "the light which lighteth every man." And "All things were made by him; and without him" (the Word) "was not anything made which hath been made."[4] "Through him" (the Son) "are all things." "All things have been created through him, and unto him . . . and in him all things consist" or have their coherence.[5] "He upholds all things by the word of his power."[6] Thus in the vision of the City of God in the Apocalypse we are made to see that the perfecting of its beauty requires that the glory and honour of all nations should be contributed to it.[1] They have all something to give which it needs.

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[1] Phil. iv. 8.

[2] Rom. ii. 14–15.

[3] Acts xvii. 27–8.

[4] John i. 4, 9, 3.

[5] 1 Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 16, 17.

[6] Heb. i. 3.

So St. Paul and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews and St. John must have been conscious that the current Hellenic philosophy of the *Logos* or divine reason in all things contained a considerable element of truth which they needed; and in fact, as the religion of Israel had assimilated elements from Persia and Greece before Christian days, so Christianity assimilated more or less largely from Hellenism. As "the Law" had been for the Jews a guardian to bring them to Christ, so their philosophy had been to some at least of the Greeks. This the Alexandrian fathers recognized, and St. Paul and St John would, perhaps, not have protested against this view. Justin Martyr, who had been "a philosopher" before he became a Christian, and remained so afterwards, recognized in all who were true to their best light, before Christ came in the flesh—in Socrates and Heracleitus no less than Abraham and Elijah, "friends of Christ" and "Christians" before their time. Like Justin, so also Augustine, two centuries later, knew that in his own case the Platonic philosophy had brought him to Christ. And not only so, but also Augustine, like Origen before him, deliberately approved of Christianity "borrowing" from Hellenism.[2]

As I have said, however, all this divine influence outside the limits of the Church was attributed by the New Testament writers to "the Word," not to "the Spirit." But when Origen, in a strange passage,[3] drew from the New Testament the positive conclusion that the Holy Spirit did not in fact act universally in the world, like the Father, nor even like the Son in all rational creatures, but only in "the saints," the later Church refused to follow him in this positive restriction of the Holy Spirit's action; and in developing the theology of the Holy Trinity they constantly insisted that the Holy Spirit, "the Lord, and Giver of life," must be recognized as in some sense operative wherever life is.[1] Thus there is much in the New Testament and in Christian fathers to encourage, and nothing to forbid, the modern missionary in China or Japan or India seeking diligently for the elements of truth in non-Christian religions, and making the most of them as preparations for Christ. They can rightly present the religion of Christ to Indians and Chinese and Japanese as the consummation and satisfaction of the highest thought and aspiration of their own sages.

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[1] Rev. xxi. 24–6.

[2] See Appended Note A on *Borrowing from Hellenism*, p. 651.

[3] *De Princip.* 1, iii, 5. (The Greek original is supplied from Justinian's letter to Mennas, see Lommatzsch, vol. xxi, p. 78, n. 2.) I call it a "strange passage," because it represents the activity of the Word or Son as extending only to rational beings, whereas in the

1. Nevertheless, when all this is said and acknowledged, there remains a difference, so great as to be startling, between the popular modern view and that of the New Testament. The root of the difference lies in the New Testament emphasis on sin. It had not wholly obliterated the image of God in man. But it had thoroughly defaced it. It had turned what was meant to be a world of light into dreadful darkness. It had brought it about that the whole movement of God towards man must become a movement to redeem or buy back, under extreme difficulty, a world which had come to lie in the evil one—it must be a movement to seek and to save that which was lost. How dominant this view of mankind is both in our Lord's attitude towards men

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New Testament His activity is extended very distinctly to all creation. It is quoted by Dr. Westcott in *Dict. of Chr. Biog.* iv, p. 136, col. 2.

[1] See *Lux Mundi: The Holy Spirit and Inspiration* (ed. 15), p. 232.

and in that of the New Testament writers I have tried to make plain already.[1] It cannot be denied. It pervades all the books. St. James and St. Peter are as 'pessimistic' in their view of the world, as it is, as St. Paul or St. John. Thus, if the New Testament does not *exclude* the idea of the universal operation of the Holy Spirit of which we get glimpses in the Old Testament, it says nothing about it. It represents mankind as needing a new effusion of the Holy Spirit. It deliberately concentrates our whole attention upon the divine purpose and enterprise of redemption, and views this purpose and enterprise as taking concrete shape first in Israel, then in the Christ, in whom the purpose of Israel was fulfilled, and then in the Church, the New Israel, the society which is commissioned to make effectual among men the offer of salvation, and which is the shrine of the Spirit and the body of Christ. There alone were men entitled to expect and receive the Spirit, and to find that sonship to God for which they were divinely created, and that brotherhood which is essential to the life of humanity, actually realized.[2]

Thus all the effort of Christian missionaries, from the apostles downward, was to present the offer of God, of which all men ought to feel their need, in a concrete shape, a thing of "here" and "now." "Behold, now is the day of salvation." "Neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." And the shelter of that name belongs to those only who have had it invoked upon them in baptism and have received the Spirit of Jesus within them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." So it is that, without denying that there is some truth in all religions, they unhesitatingly identify the "word of truth" with "the Gospel,"[1] the definite Christian message, and "the spirit of error" with all that withholds men from accepting it,[2] and they talk of the past of those who have come from contemporary heathenism as a shameful past, as darkness compared to light and foulness to cleanliness—speaking certainly as if those they are addressing would agree with them—"your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers"—"your former lusts in the times of your ignorance"—gross vices and "abominable idolatries"—"God hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."[3] "We all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, and were by nature children of wrath," "having no hope and without God in the world," "led away unto those dumb idols," "sacrificing to devils."[4] Relatively at any rate and in practical fact, they do declare that the Christian faith is the one true religion, and all others are by comparison false. For Jews indeed all that was necessary was that their eyes should be opened to the true tendency of their own religion. But for the Gentiles what was needed was the acceptance of a new religion. As Remigius told Clovis centuries later, they must "burn what they have adored." We must have the courage to face this fact.

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[1] *Belief in Christ*, chap. ix, p. 552.

[2] It must not be forgotten that the N.T. consistently proclaims not that all men are sons of God and brothers, but that they are meant to be so and in Christ have really become so. See John i. 12, 1 Pet. ii. 17, "Honour all men: love the brotherhood"; cf. 2 Pet. i. 7, where "love of the brethren" is to be the school of universal "love." See also Dr. Pollock (Bishop of Norwich), *The Brotherhood of Man* (S.P.C.K.).

2. St. Paul and St. John in different ways recognize, as we have seen,[5] that development will be necessary in the understanding and appropriation of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which lie hid

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[1] Eph. i. 13.
[2] 1 John iv. 6.
[3] 1 Pet. i. 14, 18, ii. 9, iv. 3.
[4] Eph. ii. 3, 12; 1 Cor. x. 20, xii. 2.
[5] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 614 f. See also below, chap. vii, p. 828, on the development of Christian life and doctrine.

in Christ; and they sanction by their example the appropriation of contemporary ideas and terms from non-Christian philosophies and religions, which proved to be part of the method by which the Christian faith developed. Nevertheless their emphasis is on the finality of the Christ and of the message concerning Him of which the apostles were the stewards. This message constitutes the tradition which the Church is to hand down unimpaired and unaltered. A good deal more will have to be said about the finality of the Church's Creed. At present all we need do is to recognize that the emphasis on finality is far more marked in the New Testament than the recognition of development.

3. Finally, to recur to the third feature in the contemporary estimate of the meaning of a spiritual religion of which we took account above, we cannot discover in the New Testament any trace of that unwillingness to associate the Spirit's action or presence with material forms which traditionally has characterized Protestantism. There is hardly to be found in the Bible, Old Testament or New, any echo of the Oriental or Hellenistic horror of matter, or the material body, as evil and the source of defilement. According to the Bible, everything which exists was made by the one good God and is in its original nature very good. "Every act of giving [on God's part] is good, and every [divine] gift perfect, coming down as it does from above from the Father of lights."[1] Sin has its source, not in the body or material forces, but in the perverted or rebellious will. "Sin is lawlessness," not materiality. God had no hatred of flesh as such. On the contrary, the climax of His manifestation is incarnation. "The Word was made flesh." The human "flesh" became the organ of very God. So when the Spirit came down to fulfil the presence of Christ among men, He too

[1] Jas. i. 17.

took body in a visible institution,[1] the old Israel reformed, with visible sacraments, the baptism of water and the laying on of hands and the bread and wine of the eucharist. There is no sign in the New Testament of horror at this sort of "materialism." So in the glorious prospect of the final consummation there is no idea of a world of pure unclothed spirits. The prospect is of a resurrection of the body, after the pattern of Christ's, and of a "restitution of all things"—a glorified nature.

No doubt God is pure spirit, and there are spirits, good and evil, who are not material, at least in our sense; and in our present bodies there is a grossness and corruptibility which will not belong to the "spiritual body" of our future perfection. In this sense "flesh and blood" cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. But what the future holds in store for us is still a real embodiment, like the "glorious body" of Jesus. For us men the material is the sphere and organ of the spiritual, and is to be so to all eternity. We shall have to recur to this great principle later on, and to examine certain specific charges made against St. Paul of attributing sin to the flesh or the body. But I hope the general estimate which I have given of Bible teaching about the body and the material world will be accepted as true and unexaggerated.

The result is that "spiritual" in the New Testament is put in opposition to "carnal," or to the body only as polluted and distorted by sin and habituated to sinful ways. It is not put in opposition to the bodily as it ought to be and may be. Isaac's birth, according to St. Paul, was "after the Spirit," not because it was less material than Ishmael's, which was "after the flesh,"[2] but because it was in accordance with a spiritual purpose and a promise of God. And life " in the Spirit " is not life alienated from material things and common interests, but life dominated by spiritual purpose, just as life " in the flesh " is life controlled from below by the selfish lusts and passions—and it is contrary to man's true liberty to be controlled from below.

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[1] On the idea of an "invisible Church," see Appended Note B, p. 652.

[2] Gal. iv. 29.

Thus if, as we shall see more in detail, the New Testament uses very simply the language of sacramentalism, there is nothing in this to surprise us. The horror of the material as the vehicle of the spiritual is simply not there—nor the conception of the spiritual as the disembodied. This is particularly apparent in respect of marriage and man's sexual nature. Our Lord indeed tells us that all the conditions of marriage will have passed away from our perfected humanity; and St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, still under the dominance of the expectation of an immediate end of the world, thinks marriage a less wise course than celibacy for Christians—though in later Epistles he talks about marriage in a way which suggests some change of mind ; but the sexual nature of man in itself is never in the New Testament disparaged or treated as evil, but always as good. It is " honourable in all respects, and the bed undefiled."

And surely there is no restraint upon anti-sacramental language so effective as is to be found in this region. Is not the production of a new personality —a soul or spirit destined for an immortal life in God, but liable also to the most awful spiritual disaster— is not this the greatest of spiritual events in the world and the most wonderful of the activities of the creative spirit ? And is not this entrusted by God to a material process the most liable, as experience shows, to carnal misuse ? In view of this momentous fact, can any of the arguments have any value at all which would treat the sacramental system of the Church as wholly unacceptable, and something we cannot attribute to God, because it puts spiritual realities under the control of men who may be bad men, and material things which may be unspiritually used ? We may wonder at the divine adventure, but we cannot deny that that is the way of God.

But in thus declining a false argument, we must not be blind to the exceedingly important element of truth which Protestantism has sought to guard even while it has distorted it. Outward forms are notoriously liable to become formal, and religious ceremonies very easily become unspiritual ; because the spirit is slumbering or occupied in other regions while the sacred actions are being performed, or because it is relying on the mere performance of a sacred routine, or on the satisfaction of the imagination by splendour of ceremonial. Nothing, in fact, is more conspicuous in the history of the Church than this sort of degradation of sacraments and sacred rites. They very easily become charms. It was the sense of this peril, intensified by their horror of the magic and the imposing ritual of the pagan mysteries, which made some of the Fathers use such puritan language about Church ceremonies[1] ; and it was their experience of the misuse of externals in Christian worship which made some of the leaders of later monasticism use similar language. But a religious rite is not less material or less necessary because it is simply performed. And the safeguard of the sacramental method lies only in an insistence, like St. Paul's, on the spiritual valuelessness for the individual of everything external except in proportion to the faith which uses it and the good living which results from it.

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[1] Cf. Tertullian, *de Baptismo*, 2 : "There is really nothing which so blinds men's minds as the simplicity of divine operations contrasted with the magnificence of their promised effect. So in the case of baptism, since all that happens is that with the greatest simplicity, without pomp or any novel apparatus, and without any expenditure, a man is brought down into the water and washed to the accompaniment of a few words, and comes up again little or no cleaner, therefore it is regarded as incredible that he should thereby obtain eternal life. I am a liar if, on the contrary, the solemnities and sacred rites of the idols do not produce their impressiveness and authority from their elaborate apparatus. Yet what a miserable incredulity is this which leads you to deny to God His special properties—simplicity with power !"

I hope enough has now been said, by way of preliminary, to call attention to the New Testament idea of the method of the Spirit—the embodiment of the Spirit in the visible Church—and to put it in contrast to certain dominant modern views of the religion of the Spirit which would detach it from visible institutions, and sometimes also from particular historical events and from any unique or authoritative Gospel. And we are now to proceed to ask whether the set of views about the Spirit and the Church which so plainly characterize the New Testament as a whole can really be ascribed to Christ Himself—whether He did really found, or refound and equip, the Church as a visible society—or whether all the sacramental ideas of the Church, already apparent in St. Paul, come, as so many moderns would have us believe, from the Hellenistic atmosphere in which the early Christian disciples found themselves, and have little or nothing to do with Christ. But I am conscious in this matter of being up against a vast wall of prejudice. The Catholic Church of history has by its superstitions, its moral and intellectual weaknesses, and its narrownesses—specially at certain periods—alienated such a vast body of the world's best feeling, that the very idea of the Church as the one home of the Spirit ("*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*") excites the sort of resentment which seems to deprive many men of the very capacity for fresh enquiry. Now I want to ask for fresh enquiry, such as leaves out of sight for the moment all present-day questions, and seeks simply to examine the origin of Christianity, and to ask what seem to have been the intentions of Christ Himself and of His first interpreters; and to facilitate that, I want, before I proceed to argue as to the facts, to urge some considerations which may serve in some measure to disarm prejudice and make the idea and principle of the Church at least more intelligible.

1. There is nothing, I think, more central to the mind of Christ than the principle that you can only love God in fellowship—that you can only love God by and in loving your neighbour. And then, when you ask "Who is my neighbour?" it appears that your neighbour is every man; and that the function of the Church is to give a home to all men indiscriminately, if only they want to live the good life; and to let men see in the Church what brotherhood means, there where the motives of men are sufficiently purged to make real brotherhood possible. Unfaithful to this principle as Catholic Christianity has sometimes shown itself to be, this is its root principle. It was comparatively easy for the first disciples to love one another, for they were all Jews, united by a common tradition of patriotism. But when they found out that they were required to live on equal terms with Gentiles, it was another matter. Yet St. Paul, in the spirit of Christ, insists on catholicism—that is, on the brotherhood of all men in Christ. "Receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you." Now human nature in its races and sects and competing individualities is appallingly disruptive. Nothing in Christianity could have kept believers in Christ together except the positive obligation of the one body—the obligation of membership by baptism, grace by sacraments, adherence to the apostolic ministry. The sacraments are social ceremonies as well as visible ceremonies. The "tying" of grace to sacraments in the Church embodies for each person the principle that he can only have fellowship with God by abiding in "the brotherhood."

It is because the mass of men are, as they stand, beyond the appeal of brotherhood, that the method of God is to gather those who respond to the appeal of the Gospel into an organized society which shall show, embodied in fact, what human brotherhood really means. I do not believe that till we have fully appreciated this law or fact we shall ever have a chance of understanding what Catholicism at its root means; and Church History really deserves the name only by exhibiting the principle of brotherhood in actual practice. "Ecclesiastical" ought to mean "brotherly." It did really mean this in the days when it cost men much to call themselves Christians. It may come to be so again in no distant future, and the Church may regain its ancient meaning. Meanwhile no one ought to be able to study afresh the origins of Christianity without perceiving that the principle of Church and sacraments lies neither in materialism nor in narrowness of spirit, but in the recognition that mankind cannot realize divine sonship except in brotherhood, and that mankind as it is can realize neither except by being redeemed. If the first Christians had not been bound together by the necessity of adherence to the one Church and its sacraments and ministry—if they had not identified salvation with membership in the one divine society represented by the local Church—the disruptive tendencies of class and race and tradition would have rendered the divine attempt to establish a catholic fellowship nugatory from the beginning. Here we get the fundamental reason why "credo in sanctam, catholicam ecclesiam" follows at once on "credo in Spiritum Sanctum." How to make the principle of this sequence effective again in modern society is, I think, actually the most important matter for consideration by Christians at the present day.

2. I do not think it can be denied that St. Paul

and St. Luke and St. John teach implicitly that "extra ecclesiam nulla salus," but I think we easily fail to understand what is or should be meant by "salvation." Salvation or redemption describes a great and continuous and consummated action of God in history for the realizing of His original purpose for man, which sin had baffled and almost obliterated. It is, as represented in the Bible, an action of God, public and covenanted. God, as it were, comes out into the open with His great offer. "There is the salvation." The offer was made in stages. There was an old covenant and a new. But in both stages alike the offer is made publicly, visibly, under covenant. By their relation to this great offer men are to be tested. To accept it is to be approved. To reject it or to ignore it is to be judged and (in proportion to the moral clearness with which it has been presented to man) to be condemned. This is the constant language of the New Testament. The preaching of the Gospel is by St. Paul compared to a triumphal procession through the world, the incense of which fills the air, but which (so to speak) smells differently in different nostrils, according to the different moral dispositions of men. It smells of life to those who are being saved, who welcome it as the satisfaction of their deepest need. It smells of death to those who are perishing—that is, who love the world too well to listen to it. This is the judgement.[1] And St. Paul and the other preachers of the Gospel triumphantly proclaimed the going forth of this self-acting judgement into the world. They appear to have no doubt that the good will hear and obey, and the evil or the proud only will refuse. Their experience seemed to justify that. They are not perplexed by the problem of "the good man without faith." And in fact we feel that the moral splendour of the Christian Church, as it showed itself in the comparative purity of its first history, made this triumphant proclamation legitimate. But the history of the Church has been a strange one. If its appeal varies in force with its general moral character —as St. John and St. Paul and St. Peter lead us to believe—it has often and in many different places made a sadly weakened appeal. It has had to depend on something different from the visible evidence of sanctity and especially of brotherhood. Some will argue, no doubt, from this that the nature of the appeal must be fundamentally altered. Those, on the other hand, who believe this conclusion to be mistaken, will still feel that the responsibility of men for not yielding to the appeal of the Church has been a very variable responsibility, because the Church has itself given them so many excuses for gainsaying. Those who feel this—though their sense of the undying purpose of God through the Church will not be weakened, though they would have the Church reformed and not rejected—nevertheless will rejoice to reflect that the Covenant of Salvation does not represent the whole action of God.

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[1] 2 Cor. iii. 14–15.

Apparently now all parts of the Church agree on this. In old days the Church does seem to have believed itself entitled to pronounce the final sentence upon anyone who in fact rejected its message or refused its authority. But by emphasizing "invincible ignorance," or by considering more broadly the conditions of human responsibility, we have quite passed out of this frame of mind. "We know in part, and we prophesy in part." We are to "judge nothing before the time." It is the Church's duty to declare the message of God, and (while at the same time it makes sure that what it is delivering is "the message" and nothing else) to refuse to reduce it. It may be its duty to judge and to excommunicate this or that individual or group. But this is to leave them to God—not to profess to pass the final sentence on them. The Church was surely going quite beyond its commission and authority when it sought to formulate an answer as to what would be the destiny of unbaptized infants, or unconverted heathen, or of anyone however rebellious and sinful. It has got authority to bear a certain witness. It is set to administer a covenant of redemption or salvation. It must let men know the warrant by which it speaks and acts. But it can pronounce no final sentence. It has no authority to draw up any list of the lost or any infallible catalogue of saints. The day of judgement, we are assured, will be a day of surprises, and we are to " judge nothing before the time."

Nevertheless, here in the New Testament we find this covenant of salvation offered to us in the Church on the authority of Christ. Is it rightly so offered? Did Christ really found such a Church as appears in the New Testament, or was the conception due to other influences and had Christ nothing to do with Church and sacraments? That is the question which next claims our attention.

APPENDED NOTE A (to p. 638)

ON BORROWING FROM HELLENISM

St. Augustine *de Doctrina Christiana*, cap. xl, xli, gives a suggested allegorical explanation of the Israelites " borrowing of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment," and so " spoiling the Egyptians." They were commanded to take these things, he says, to convert them to a good purpose. In the same way in more recent times the heathen have not only false superstitions and heavy burdens, which Christians, when they go out from their fellowship, ought to hate and avoid, but also (he is speaking, he says, specially of the Platonists) liberal instruction and moral principles and some true things about the worship of the only true God, which they did not invent, but dug, as it were gold and silver, out of the mines of God's providence which is universal; and all this Christians shall "convey" to good uses. So also their useful social institutions, which may be represented by the "raiment" of the Egyptians. Such "borrowing" St. Augustine attributes to innumerable Greek Christian authors and among the Westerns to Cyprian, Lactantius, Victorinus, Optatus, and Hilary. The suggested interpretation, which Augustine does not wish to press, is based probably upon Origen's letter to Gregory of Neo-Caesarea, though Origen appears to restrict what may be "borrowed" with more caution than Augustine. Cf. Dr. McNeile's *Exodus* (Westminster Commentaries), p. 74.

So also Origen and Augustine call attention to Moses receiving enlightenment from Jethro (see Origen, *Hom. in Ex.* and Aug. *de Doctr. Christ.*, prolog. § 7). "For Moses," says Augustine, "knew that a wise counsel, in whatever mind it might originate, was to be ascribed not to the man who devised it, but to Him who is the truth, the unchangeable God." For Justin Martyr, see *Apol.*, i, 46.

APPENDED NOTE B (to p. 643)

ON THE IDEA OF THE INVISIBLE CHURCH

From the sixteenth century, beginning with the teaching of Luther, down to modern times, an idea has been associated with Protestantism that while *the* (local) *churches* of which we read in the New Testament were indisputably visible and mixed bodies—with good members and bad—*the Church*, the one home of salvation, the Church of which such glorious things are spoken in the Epistle to the Ephesians and elsewhere, was an invisible company of the elect known only to God in His predestinating love and independent of all local and visible attachments. I do not think it is necessary to argue against this at any length. Since Rothe wrote his *Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche* (1837) it has passed into disrepute in Germany, its first home. Its present status may be seen in Harnack's *Constitution and Law of the Church*, especially in his controversy with Sohm, pp. 176 ff. I may refer also to the discussion in *The Church and the Ministry*, chap. i, and to Dr. Mason's essay on "Early Conceptions of the Church" in *The Early History of the Church and Ministry* (Macmillan).

In the Acts and in the Epistles of St. Paul we hear constantly of "the churches," i.e. the local churches established at each place. In the New Testament these local churches do not seem to be regarded (at least not generally) as federated into one Church or as component elements of the one Church. Rather they are regarded as each of them representative of the one Church. Each church is *the* Church; and the members of each local church are thereby members of the one Church, baptized by one Spirit into one body. To put it conversely, the one Church of God—the Church refounded in Jesus Christ—is not composed of all the different churches of Judæa, Asia, Achaia, etc., but it is composed of all the individual members of all the local churches. But this one Church of God is, just as much as the local churches, a visible body, save that the Head (Christ) and the members departed this life are of course out of sight. This may now be taken for granted, and I will content myself with quoting Dr. Hort, as he writes in his posthumous book *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 169, in which he assuredly does not exhibit any ecclesiastical bias.

> "I said just now that the one ecclesia of [the Epistle to the] Ephesians includes all members of all partial ecclesiae. In other words, there is no indication that St. Paul regarded the conditions of membership in the universal ecclesia as differing from the condition of membership in the partial local ecclesiae. Membership in a local ecclesia was obviously visible and external, and we have no evidence that St. Paul regarded membership in the universal ecclesia as invisible and exclusively spiritual, and as shared by only a limited number of the members of the external ecclesiae, those, namely, whom God had chosen out of the great mass and ordained to life, or those whose faith in Christ was a genuine and true faith. What very plausible grounds could be urged for this distinction was to be seen in later generations; but it seems to me incompatible with any reasonable interpretation of St. Paul's words."

We notice that St. Paul writes in his earlier epistles to "the churches of Galatia," "the church of the Thessalonians," "the church of God at Corinth," but in his later Epistles to "the saints" at Philippi and Ephesus and Colossae. But still we get the local "church" in Phil. iv. 15 and Col. iv. 16, and the use of "church" for the congregation assembling in a particular house.

APPENDED NOTE C

ON THE "HOLY SPIRIT" IN THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON

On p. 629 above attention ought to have been paid to the remarkable passage in the *Psalms of Solomon*—a Pharisaic document of about 50 B.C.—in which the special presence of the holy spirit in the Messiah the Son of David is again anticipated: see Ps. xvii. 42: "God will make him mighty by means of (His) holy spirit, and wise by means of the spirit of understanding, with strength and righteousness." This anticipation among the Pharisees in the age preceding our Lord's helps to account for John the Baptist's expectation: see Mark i. 8, John i. 32–3.

CHAPTER II

DID JESUS CHRIST FOUND THE CHURCH?

THE Bible record divides itself naturally into three stages. First, in the Old Testament, we have the story of the long process by which Israel's God, Jehovah, becomes defined in character as the one and only God, the Creator of all that is, perfect in goodness and power, who has chosen Israel for His organ or instrument of self-disclosure, and is one day to manifest Himself through Israel to all the world in the perfection of His kingdom. Part of the first volume of this series was devoted to vindicating this claim of Israel to be the prophet of the real God.[1] Next, in the Gospels, there comes into the forefront the figure of Jesus of Nazareth, and He comes to be defined in the minds of His disciples as the Christ, the fulfilment of the purposes of God, His true and only Son incarnate, "the Word made flesh." The validity of this definition was the subject of our second volume. Finally, as Jesus passes out of sight into the heavens, whence He is to come again to wind up the history of this world, the stage which He has left is occupied (in the Acts and the Epistles) by the coming and activity of the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of the Father and the Son—and He too receives embodiment—that is, the Spirit appears as inspiring and fashioning the Church, and the Church appears as the only organ of the Divine Spirit and instrument of the great salvation.

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[1] *Belief in God*, chaps. iv, v, vi, pp. 74, 110, 133, and see also *Belief in Christ*, chap. i, p. 297.

Here again, however, at this last stage of divine self-disclosure, we advance upon the ground of controversy old and new. For (1) various traditions of Protestantism have refused to assign so high a function to the visible Church; and indeed the history of the Church has made it sadly evident that it cannot be regarded as the manifestation of the Spirit in that complete and perfect sense in which Jesus Christ is the manifestation of God. There is plainly here a good deal that requires discussion, and we know too well what strong prejudices of different kinds make frank enquiry in this field singularly difficult to many of us.

2. Upon the old controversy between Catholic and Protestant something has been said in the last chapter—that is, it was argued that the high conception of the function of the Church is unmistakably present in the New Testament as it stands. And this, we note, is now commonly conceded by modern critics. But also they commonly attribute this conception, with much besides in traditional Christianity, to St. Paul and other influences which helped to form the mind of the early disciples, and would have us believe that it was read back upon Jesus without historical justification. Here, then, we get upon one of the chief grounds of modern controversy which will occupy us in this and the following chapter—the question whether really Jesus of Nazareth is responsible for the Church at all.

I

In the volume which preceded this we had to give consideration to an idea of Christ which has been specially associated with the names of Schweitzer and Loisy, and which has had in England both eager partisans and strenuous opponents.[1] According to these adherents of what is called the "apocalyptic" idea of Jesus Christ, it is impossible to attribute to Him the foundation or equipment of the Church, because that involves His making more or less elaborate provision for an indefinite future; whereas in fact He anticipated no future for the world at all. His death was to be the signal for the divine intervention. He would be at once raised to the glory of God, and as the Messiah from heaven would be sent to end the world and judge the world and inaugurate the Kingdom of God, in which His elect would share with Him eternal felicity. It was only the complete breakdown of the expectation of the immediate coming of Christ (which He Himself proclaimed) which made room for and also made necessary the institution of the organized Church, and the idea of the Church as in some sense already the Kingdom of God on earth. But all this was an afterthought due to the experience which proved that the apocalyptic proclamation of Christ was a delusion.

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[1] *Belief in Christ*, pp. 333–4, 447 ff.

We have already seen cause to reject this whole view of the position and teaching of Christ as singularly one-sided. In particular we saw reason to believe that our Lord when on earth had explicitly declared that He had no map of the future spread before His eyes, and later had warned His disciples that the "times or seasons" were not to be disclosed to them; and that, though He certainly prefigured His final coming and the end of the world, He also paid much attention to the intervening period—the length of which He wholly refused to define—which was to be occupied with the growth of the Kingdom on earth and the preaching of the Gospel in all the world, and warned His disciples of the severe testing of their faith which "the divine delay" would involve.[1] The rejection of the extreme position of Schweitzer has become general. Nevertheless the apocalyptic idea is still frequently made the ground for the assertion that Jesus can have founded no permanent Church, and instituted no sacraments or ministry, and given it no rules or directions [1]; and, on other grounds, it is so commonly denied that He founded any such rite of perpetual memorial [2] as the Lord's Supper, and the connexion of Church institutions, such as appear plainly in the Acts and the Epistles, with the historical Jesus is so frequently repudiated, that the whole question must be carefully examined—the question, I mean, whether our Lord really made any such provision for the future of the movement inaugurated during His lifetime, and if so, what it was.

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[1] See on all this, *Belief in Christ*, chap. v, p. 432.

We must, of course, proceed as before purely on the historical and critical basis—asking simply what is the most probable conclusion on the evidence.

It has been already remarked that if you had asked one of the early converts what it was to be a "Christian," he would have replied either that it was to believe that "Jesus is the Lord" or that it was to have "received the Spirit." The original Creed, which summarized the first experience of the Christians prior to any reflection or theory, may be said to have consisted of these two articles—the one being concerned with a past experience, the experience of the crucifixion and glorification of their Master; the other with a present experience of the activity of the ascended Christ, in both of which experiences they saw the fulfilment of prophecy.[3] If you had had the opportunity further to question this primitive Christian, you would have found that he and his fellows anticipated no long continuance for the Church. The death of any one of their fellow-Christians was a shock to them. For their eager hopes led them to expect a very speedy "coming" of Christ in glory to end the present order and establish His kingdom in the world. But you would have taken note that this expectation of the speedy dissolution of the world, and absorption of the Church in the Kingdom, did not hinder their sense of present duties. Alike at Jerusalem, at Antioch, at Corinth, and elsewhere, you would have seen the Church behaving like a permanent society which has to take counsel for the future, and organize itself and use its resources. It has certain sacred meetings and sacred rites, and it is under a certain rule or order which was delivered to it ("the tradition") by its apostolic founders.

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[1] As by Dr. Inge, see *Outspoken Essays*, series i (1919), pp. 227 f. and 249; also see below, p. 659.

[2] As by Dr. Rashdall, *Idea of Atonement*, p. 59.

[3] See App. Note A, p. 684, on N.T. interpretation of prophecy.

Dr. Inge, writing about the vexed question of divorce, has recently used a very unfortunate argument. He has said that—

> "the real difficulty in appealing to the Gospels [on this subject] is a different one. Our Lord was not in a position to repeal either the law of Moses or the laws of the Roman Empire, nor did He ever think of doing so. He was not legislating even for the Church, for there was no Church to legislate for; none of His disciples had any suspicion that 'the Church' was anything more than a brief stop-gap till the Messianic Kingdom of God should come."[1]

Now, to me it appears quite certain that our Lord did, not indeed repeal, but revise by His own authority the law of Moses in general ("It was said to them of old time . . . but I say unto you") as one who was establishing Israel and its law on a new basis; and if words have any meaning and if the combined authority of our earliest documents really gives us trustworthy witness about Christ, He did revise the law of Moses in respect of divorce particularly, quite definitely and trenchantly, though there is a discrepancy in the reports touching one single point. But I am not being drawn away from the course of my argument by the particular question of divorce. My point is this. Dr. Inge would have us believe that the expectation of a speedy end of the world renders absurd the idea of Christ having legislated for the Church. This argument I call "unfortunate," because we do precisely know that in the minds of the first disciples there was no such incompatibility between the expectation of the speedy end and the belief that they were, as a Church, in this particular respect under a law. St. Paul when he wrote the first Epistle to the Corinthians certainly expected the speedy coming of the end before his own death. But none the less he shows himself throughout the epistle an organizer of the Church, zealous to confront and meet its present difficulties, as one who builds for the future. And in the task of organizing the Church he is conscious of a certain "tradition" which is common to him and the rest of the apostles[1]; and at the centre of this tradition there are certain "words" or commands "of the Lord" to which he appeals from time to time as of final authority,[2] amongst them being a word of Christ prohibiting divorce, which St. Paul carefully distinguishes from his own judgement on matters touching marriage[3]—judgements which at one point at least are affected by his expectation of an immediate end of the world.

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[1] The words are quoted from an article called "A Defence of our Divorce Laws" in the *Evening Standard* of December 21, 1922.

Quite certainly then in St. Paul's mind the expectation of the speedy end of the world was not inconsistent with the belief that Christ had in the matter of divorce and in other matters legislated for the Church while He was on earth. St. Paul regarded himself certainly as an officer in the Church, which was indeed to have a very short existence in this world, but was meanwhile "under the law to Christ." And this confirms the conclusion which we draw from all the Gospels, that Christ did both announce His future coming—though in fact He definitely refused to say anything about the time or season of the coming—and also in certain particulars made careful provision for the intermediate period, whether it should prove to be long or short.

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[1] 1 Cor. xv. 1–3, 11.

[2] See *Belief in Christ,* p. 385.

[3] 1 Cor. vii. 10, 12, 25.

No doubt "the Lord," whose words St. Paul occasionally refers to, was by him predominantly thought of as the glorified Christ in the heavens, who, as he believed, had called and commissioned him as one of His apostles. But the conditions of his call he knew to have been exceptional. "Those who were apostles before him" had been already so when Christ appeared to them after His resurrection on the third day.[1] He knew therefore that they were appointed during Christ's lifetime on earth; and from the beginning of his converted life he had received the "tradition" of the institution by Christ of the eucharist for the continual memorial of Himself.[2] Certainly, then, St. Paul held that it was during His life on earth that our Lord had, in part, equipped His Church with officers and a solemn rite, as well as certain specific commands. And if this is sufficiently evident in St. Paul's epistles, it is at least as evident in the Acts. There at starting the necessary condition for apostolate is described as being a long companionship with Christ on earth—from the preaching of John the Baptist to the Ascension. This is one of the links which binds the Acts to the Third Gospel as two volumes of one work. What you see occurring in the Acts was prepared for and provided for during the earthly life of Jesus.

But if it be acknowledged that the apostles themselves were more or less mistaken about the immediate Coming, is it not possible that St. Paul and St. Luke were mistaken about the origin of the Church, and threw back upon Christ while on earth what was in fact only or mainly the growth of necessity after He had disappeared? I think there is a very great difference between the possibilities of mistake in the two cases. But we will ignore this. Whatever might have been possible in the way of a mistake, I think the whole historical situation, as the Gospels represent it, no less than particular sayings ascribed to Christ, which show the surest evidences of authenticity, compels us to believe that Christ did in fact make precise provision for His Church.

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[1] Gal. i. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 4–11.

[2] This is argued in *Belief in Christ*, pp. 395 ff.

II

It is, however, a mistake to ask whether Christ while on earth *founded* the Church, for it was already in existence. We understand nothing if we do not understand this. 'The Church' is in the first instance the holy people of God—Israel. St. Stephen in his speech before the Jews gives us the clue. He is represented as saying of Moses that "he was with the church in the wilderness."[1] The Church, that is, was at least as old as the redemption of Israel from Egypt and its foundation as a nation. The word *ecclesia* was the common Greek word to describe the official assembly of any people. In the Greek Bible it is used in this sense with another word 'synagogue' to translate two Hebrew words for the assembly of the holy people—the "congregation of the children of Israel." But in New Testament times the second word ('synagogue') is used to describe the place of religious assembly for the Jews other than the temple, and the first word ('ecclesia') had in the Greek Bible tended to mean the holy people itself, whether assembled or not. It was in this sense especially, though not exclusively, that it passed into the language of the New Israel[1]; and this is the sense in which Stephen uses it. It means the same as Israel or the people of God. Into this people our Lord was born. In it He was educated in the Scriptures, and there are the most evident signs in His frequent references to the Scriptures that, while He in no way anticipated the scientific investigation of later ages, He not only had meditated deeply upon them but interpreted them, by contrast to Pharisees and Scribes and apocalyptic fanatics, with a profound spirituality of insight. In the Scriptures he found the Messianic hope, the expectation of the Kingdom of God, and, as we have seen, reconstructed that hope, partly by the elimination of certain gross elements of unreal expectation, partly by recalling to vivid expression forgotten elements, and proclaimed a doctrine of Messiah, which was both old and new—in which sense He Himself was the Christ who was to come. But the coming of the Christ meant the consummation of Israel's hope, not its extinction. In the days of the Christ, according to the prophets, the holy people were to be consecrated under a New Covenant: it was to receive a new outpouring of the Spirit; it was to witness the Resurrection of the dead; it was to become the centre of religion for the world.[2] The Christ is not an isolated figure. He is the central figure in a renewed people. His coming is or implies the coming of the Kingdom, and it is in the Kingdom or universal reign of God that the hope of Israel is to be consummated. All this we see clearly to have been in the mind of Jesus of Nazareth. It was the atmosphere which He breathed.

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[1] Acts vii. 38.

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[1] Harnack, *Constitution and Law of the Church* (Engl. trans., Williams & Norgate), p. 15, says: "Qāhāl—in the LXX translated as a rule by ἐκκλησία—is the community in its relation to God." *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, by Moulton and Milligan (Hodder & Stoughton), says: "It is the LXX term for the community of Israel, whether assembled or no." These statements are much too absolute, as a concordance to the LXX will show us. However, there is tendency towards this meaning.

[2] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 310–15.

But the record of Israel, generation after generation, had shown it to be a body obstinately refusing to walk after the counsel of God. "Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider" is the complaint of God through the prophets. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in ears," exclaimed Stephen, "ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." But the failure in the people and their leaders is not to defeat the purpose of God through Israel—it only narrows its channel temporarily. There is always a faithful remnant, "the meek of the earth," who, though politically insignificant, become the channel of the divine purpose. This is the interpretation of history offered by Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, the second Isaiah—indeed we may say all the true prophets. So it was in our Lord's day. The people and their rulers reject the counsel of God. They refuse the Christ. But there was again a faithful remnant, "the meek and lowly in heart," who accepted Him. This then again is the true Israel, in our Lord's eyes. "Fear not, little flock," He is recorded to have said to them; "it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."[1]

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[1] Luke xii. 32. The particular phrase is peculiar to Luke. But the sense of it is common to all the Evangelists. Thus (1) the preaching of John the Baptist has for its object to provide a new Israel, true children of Abraham, "a people prepared for the Lord." (2) The revision of the Law, including the divorce law, by our Lord means that the vocation of Israel is being fulfilled and not annulled. (3) The exclusive mission of Christ: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" means that He is come to reconstitute Israel, so far at least as it will consent to listen. (4) The claim that "Jesus is the Christ" or "the Christ is Jesus" is of itself sufficient proof that the believers in Him are the true Israel.

After the statements of the case made from very different points of view by Harnack (in his *Constitution and Law of the Church,* There was a crisis in the Galilean ministry which may be identified with the murder of John the Baptist, and the mission of the Apostles, and the feeding of the five thousand (St. Mark vi.), when Jesus appears to have taken for granted His rejection by the Jews as a whole and by their leaders. They would not have Him at all, or they would only have Him on terms with which He would make no compromise. Yet His time was not yet come to go up to Jerusalem and die. He has a preliminary task to fulfil. This appears to be the training of the Twelve, and on this accordingly He concentrates Himself. There ensues a period of journeyings outside the dominions of Herod, who had murdered John and was suspected of a like design upon Jesus,[1] and for a time outside the Jewish territory altogether, which brought Jesus and His Apostles at last round to Caesarea Philippi, the scene of Peter's confession; which again is followed by the last slow progress to Jerusalem.[2] The training of the Twelve is all through this period the central occupation of the Lord; and He appears to be

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pp. 221, 224, and in *Expansion of Christianity*, i, 300 f.), and by Dr. H. F. Hamilton (*People of God*, vol. ii, pp. 29 ff.), it is hardly necessary to repeat the proofs that the Christian Church from the first believed itself to be the old Israel reconstituted. The sense of this is constantly in St. Paul's mind, as in his whole appeal to the Old Testament, or when, writing to Gentiles, he speaks of the old Jews as "our fathers," 1 Cor. x. 1, or in his argument in Gal. iii. 16 and Rom. ix. 6 ff. and xi. 5, 16 ff. It is the assumption of St. James in the Acts (Acts xv. 14–18) and of the Epistles of St. Peter (1 Pet. i. 1) and St. James (i. 1), and of the Apocalypse (see Swete's note on vii. 4–8, pp. 96 f.), and of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The sense that only the believers in Christ constitute the true Israel is equally apparent after it has become obvious that the old Israel has in the mass rejected Christ (Apoc. ii. 9, iii. 9), and also, as in the beginning of the Acts, while the hope is entertained that they still may welcome Him. Even in St. James's Epistle you still feel the unwillingness of the writer sharply to distinguish the Old Israel and the New. Nevertheless it is the Christians whom he addresses as "the twelve tribes."

[1] Luke xiii. 32.

[2] See Headlam's *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ*, chap. vii (Murray).

training them not only as disciples, but as apostles, as rulers and pastors of the Israel to be.

Thus in the parable of the husbandmen the vineyard is Israel, and the point of it is that the vine dressers, the actual rulers of Israel, who are in charge of its destinies, are to be utterly rejected, and the vineyard entrusted to "others" (Mark and Luke) or "other husbandmen." I think this most naturally means the apostles. It is only they who can be said to take the place of Scribes and Pharisees and Chief Priests in order to "render" to God "the fruits of the vineyard [Israel] in their season."[1]

Again, in the parable of the household, during the prolonged absence of the Master,[2] we have "servants" left in "authority." And when Peter asks the question, "Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us [the Twelve], or even unto all ?" our Lord, as usual giving no direct answer, suggests by another question that he (Peter) or they (the Twelve)[3] are in the position of the "faithful and wise steward, whom his lord will set over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season." Here we have another figure of the house of Israel under new government or management. The Twelve are being prepared to be its "stewards." Once more in the day of the Kingdom, the day of Christ's sovereignty, the Twelve are to be found seated upon twelve thrones, judges of the twelve tribes of Israel, as well as participants in the heavenly feast.[4] In a sense, as we have seen,[5] the glorification of Christ and the mission of the Spirit *was* the coming of Jesus in His

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[1] In Matt. xxi. 43, after the change of metaphor from vineyard to building, we have the words, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to *a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*" This, I suppose, would be the Church of the believers in Jesus.

[2] Mark xiii. 34–7 ; cf. Luke xii. 36–48.

[3] On the relation of Peter to the other apostles, see Appended Note B, p. 685.

[4] Matt. xix. 28 ; Luke xxii. 30.

[5] *Belief in Christ*, pp. 440–1

Kingdom ; and nothing is more certain than that in the beginning of the Acts the Apostles appear as the judges and pastors or rulers of the New Israel. Nothing seems to me to be more idle than the attempt to deny either that St. Luke in the Acts represents the apostles as divinely appointed officers of the body of the disciples, or that St. Paul conceives the apostolate which he shared with the Twelve as instituted in the first instance by Christ on earth and as possessed of official authority by divine appointment.[1] Their position after Pentecost confirms what the parables and sayings of St. Mark and St. Luke suggest, that our Lord constituted and trained the Twelve as the future officers of Israel. Critical scholars are not willing to rely on the record of the First Gospel when it is unsupported by the others without scrupulous examination, and that for substantial reasons. But I think the famous passage [2] which, in the First Gospel alone, follows the Confession of Peter falls in so precisely with the story of the Gospel and the Acts as a whole that we may or must accept it as true. Every word of it tells and reflects the historical situation.

The confession of the Messiahship of Jesus by His disciples was confessedly a crucial event. It was most natural that Jesus should have met it with His solemn benediction, as something wrought in the soul of Simon by God Himself. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." [3] But also the sense of relief to the soul of the Master which the confession brought, and which is suggested by the rich benediction pronounced upon

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[1] On the Acts, see above, pp. 632 ff. On the authority of the apostles in St. Paul, see Appended Note C, p. 688.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 17–19.

[3] See Bruce as quoted in Dr. Box's excellent commentary in *The Century Bible*, p. 263.

Simon, is unmistakably genuine.[1] Jesus elsewhere shows the value He set on a solid foundation for a spiritual fabric. Such a foundation He could not find in the shifting and untrustworthy faith of the multitude. He "did not"—indeed He could not—"trust himself unto them." But, by a process of selection and training, now at last there had been engendered in the Twelve, or in Simon their spokesman, a faith at least capable of being solidified into such a rock as could be safely built upon. So He blesses Simon, under a name which the Fourth Gospel tells us He had found for him on first meeting him. "I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter—Rock-man—and on this rock [2] I will build my Church," or, as Dr. Hort would render it, "My Israel," the true Israel acknowledging the Christ. And as the old prophets had always proclaimed the nucleus of Israel indestructible, so Jesus proclaims the Israel of His new foundation—"the gates of death [hades] shall not prevail against it." [3] And just as Isaiah, under divine commission, had appointed Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, steward of the house of David, with the power of the keys to open and shut, in place of the worthless Shebna, so Jesus promises to appoint Peter steward of the new house of David (Isa. xxii. 22),[4]

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[1] H. S. Holland's memorable sermon in *Creed and Character*, p. 49.

[2] The rock is surely the *person*: cf. a remarkable Rabbinic saying concerning Abraham, "When God saw Abraham who was going to arise, he said, Lo, I have discovered a *petra* to build and to found the world upon. Therefore he calls Abraham 'rock,' as it is said (Isa. li. 1)." See Taylor, *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*, p. 160.

[3] Two points should be noticed. (1) The foundation was no doubt a *re*foundation; cf. St. James's quotation of the "prophets," "I will build again the tabernacle of David" (Acts xv. 16). (2) What is promised to the new Israel is neither more nor less than that it shall not, any more than the Christ Himself, be swallowed up by death.

[4] "The keys of the Kingdom of heaven" I think it cannot be doubted that here "the Kingdom" is identified with the Church, though doubtless in general it is a wider and a vaguer term.

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and He assigns to him the authority to "bind" and "loose"—which was well recognized among the Jews, and meant official authority to prohibit or allow—a legislative power in the Church, that is, but no absolute power, for, to the Jews, these words implied a divine law to be interpreted. It was this interpretative authority which the Jewish rabbis had so grievously misused. "They had made the word of God of none effect by their tradition." This authority, then, is to pass from the present Jewish authorities to Peter.[1] The authority, we note, is by Christ reconstituted, although it has been so grievously abused, but with the warning subsequently given that it may be so again.[2]

In a later passage of St. Matthew's Gospel our Lord is again reported to have referred to the power of binding and loosing, now apparently as inhering in the smallest church, or community of believers, who shall meet in His name, and here the power is so described as to be plainly not only legislative but also disciplinary over the individual—"to bind" carries with it exclusion from the community.[3]

At this point we must pass from the First Gospel to the Fourth. There our Lord is represented on the evening of His resurrection as commissioning "the disciples," which here in all probability, as throughout the later part of the Gospel, means the Twelve,[4] to perpetuate His own apostolate: "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye Holy Spirit: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." If we interpret the authority to bind and loose promised to St. Peter in St. Matthew, chap. xvi., as it is interpreted in chap. xviii., viz. as including the authority of discipline over individuals, it will be seen that it is substantially the same authority which was then promised to Peter which is here bestowed upon all "the disciples." It is the authority to admit individuals to the Church or to exclude them as unfit, to excommunicate and to absolve, and it implies as its background the kind of legislative power which was ordinarily carried by the phrase "binding and loosing." And again in the appendix to the Gospel (chap. xxi.) Peter is given the commission of a shepherd—which in Jewish language means a ruler—to govern and feed the flock of Christ, the circumstances of this commission strongly suggesting that what we are witnessing is the restoration of Peter after his fall, and that we are not meant to draw the conclusion that the pastoral office was peculiar to St. Peter.[1]

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[1] On the relation of Peter to the other apostles, implied here and elsewhere in the N.T, see Appended Note *B*, p. 685.

[2] Luke xii. 45–8.

[3] This passage, Matt. xviii. 15–20—which follows very closely on Jewish precedents, see Dr. Box's notes—must be noted here because of the importance of the *disciplinary* power which is attached to binding and loosing. Taken in general, it suggests a situation where there are a number of small Christian communities. That is a later situation, and accordingly critical scholars doubt its authenticity. I wish to use it only as showing the meaning assigned to "binding" and "loosing." It may be, however, that vers. 18–20 should be detached from vers. 15–17.

[4] See Appended Note D on the meaning of John xx. 21, 22, p. 690.

These passages of St. Matthew and St. John will be estimated differently by scholars, no doubt, according to their differing estimates of the trustworthiness of these Gospels. They appear to me to indicate as belonging to the apostolate just the kind of authority which in fact we see belonging to it, and unquestioned, in the Acts and in St. Paul's Epistles.[2] This unquestioned authority attributed to the apostles seems to me to require some specific acts of Christ to explain it. Thus I see no reason to doubt that the texts we have been considering are really historical.

[1] See below, p. 685.

[2] See below, p. 688.

But whatever be the historical estimate formed of these passages, the evidence of the Acts and St. Paul's Epistles must not be underrated, nor the indications in St. Mark and St. Luke explained away. If it be asked why the same explicit stress is not laid by these two evangelists on the apostolic commissions as appears in St. Matthew and St. John, I suppose the right answer probably is, that when these Gospels were written there was no dispute about the apostolic authority, as being derived from Christ Himself, such as would have suggested any particular enquiry into what exactly Christ had done; that St. Mark's selection of incidents was probably determined in the main by a previous selection made by St. Peter for the instruction and edification of converts; and that St. Luke appears to have been under pressure of space and he may naturally have felt that enough about apostolic authority appeared in the Acts. On the other hand, I think it is very likely that the emphasis on St. Peter's position which is apparent in the First Gospel was due to the need the author felt to correct the tendency in Jewish-Christian circles to make St. James the chief of the apostles. And the Epistles of St. John show us plainly why he should have wished to emphasize the apostolic commission by recalling what were to him well-remembered incidents. But the reason why this or that incident does not appear in a historical record is, we know, a matter of very uncertain speculation.

Jesus then, let us conclude, did not found a new Church, but He did refound the old Church on the new basis of faith in His Messiahship, and did equip it with teaching, new as well as old, and also, in the persons of the Twelve, with authoritative officers.

III

Further, we have no critical justification for calling in question the institution by Christ, as sacraments or sacred rites of His New Israel, the ordinances of baptism and the eucharist. Baptism, it would seem, was already in the time of our Lord (with circumcision and sacrifice) the rite for the incorporation of Gentile proselytes into the community of Israel.[1] The whole ceremony was their "new birth" as Israelites [2]; and as circumcision of course applied only to males and sacrifices were confined to Jerusalem, baptism assumed the chief importance. As used by John the Baptist, baptism was based upon the need to constitute "a people prepared for the Lord," that is, an Israel based, as in the teaching of the ancient prophets, not merely upon physical descent, but also upon moral fitness; and, according to the Fourth Gospel, John's baptism was carried on in the circle of the disciples of Jesus.[3]

But in John's teaching, as represented in the foundation records (Mark and Q), it was announced that He who was to come, whose precursor John was, would baptize with a new sort of baptism, to administer which John could make no claim. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost," or "with the Holy Ghost and with fire." If these words stood alone, it might be doubted whether the baptism here spoken of was to be literal or symbolical; but the abundant pouring out of the gifts of the Spirit was from of old associated with the coming of the Messiah and the Kingdom. Very little is said about it in the Synoptic Gospels; but at the beginning of the Acts it is unmistakably implied that Jesus before His departure had assured the disciples that the "promise of the Father" would be fulfilled to them within a few days. And on the day of Pentecost they were accordingly "baptized" with the gift of the Spirit and its accompanying power. As the matter is described in the Acts, the gift of the Spirit was given in the first instance to the original nucleus of believers by a sudden effusion, accompanied by outward signs, which was unique; but for subsequent adherents of the new fellowship it was given (without any apparent question or deliberation) through baptism, which was regarded as the instrument of the forgiveness of sins and incorporation into the community, and was accompanied or followed by the gift of the Spirit, normally attached to the laying on of hands. We should thus be led to suppose that baptism in the literal sense was an institution of Christ's which the apostles administered from the first on His instructions. And in the First Gospel at its conclusion we have the express direction of Christ given to the Eleven, "Go ye and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into [or 'in'] the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Now, there is no good reason to doubt that all these words formed part of the original text of St. Matthew; yet critics may not unreasonably doubt whether our Lord on this occasion can have so solemnly and emphatically pronounced the threefold name of God. If it had been so, we cannot but suspect, the early teaching in Jerusalem would have been somewhat different. But it is probable enough that, so far at least as the command to go out and baptize is concerned, the First Gospel was following the lost ending of St. Mark.[1] This no doubt is only conjecture, but the unquestioned position of baptism in the Church from its very beginning would certainly seem to indicate that it was an appointment of Christ. St. Paul's language also (in Eph. v. 25–6) seems to attach it to Christ. Further, in the Fourth Gospel we have the record of a conversation of our Lord with Nicodemus in which He defines the future instrument of the new birth as " water and the Holy Ghost," and we have abundant reason for refusing to consider the words of Christ reported in the Fourth Gospel as destitute of historical basis.

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[1] See a note with references in Headlam's *Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ*, pp. 137–8, and Klausner's *Jesus of Nazareth* (Dr. Danby's trans., Allen Unwin, 1925), pp. 246–7.

[2] See references to the Rabbis in Edersheim, *l.c.*: "As he stepped out of these waters he was considered as 'born anew' —in the language of the Rabbis, as if he were a 'little child just born' or 'a child for one day.' One who makes a proselyte was as if he created a soul." These quotations of course are later than the New Testament and it cannot be proved that the idea of the proselyte as 'new born' dates from our Lord's time.

[3] John iv. 2.

However, without resting our case on single passages or on conjectures, the original prophecy of John the Baptist coupled with the record of the Acts, indicating the undisputed position of baptism from the first, suffice to warrant the belief that Jesus Christ took over the ceremony of washing, freed from animal sacrifices and circumcision, from the Jewish Church as the ceremony of initiation into the New Israel, henceforth to be accompanied with the new power of the Spirit which belonged to the Messiah.

But the evidence that Jesus instituted the sacrament of His body and blood in the bread and cup of the Last Supper is much more direct and indisputable. I have already contended [2] that there is no reasonable ground for doubting that the portion of St. Paul's original teaching at Corinth on this subject, which he recalls to the memory of the Corinthians in his First Epistle (xi. 23 ff.), was, like the formulated account of the Resurrection and the appearances of the risen Jesus which he also recalls (xv. 1 ff.), something which he had " received " at his conversion. Therefore it was already the formulated tradition of the Church a very few years after the Crucifixion. I need not repeat the argument here, which seems to me convincing.

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[1] The command to baptize is also implied in [Mark] xvi. 16.

[2] *Belief in Christ*, p. 395, Note A. I have written about the shorter text of St. Luke in *Can We then Believe*, pp. 199 ff.

St. Paul's words are very familiar: "I received from the Lord [as its source] that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you [on your behalf]: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." The accounts in St. Mark's Gospel and St. Matthew's, though doubtless later in date, are substantially the same. If they do not contain the words "This do in remembrance of me," they must imply them. St. Mark must have been fully alive to the practice of the churches of St. Paul's foundation and others. He must have taken it for granted that the rite, as instituted by Christ, was, as St. Paul specifically says, intended for subsequent observance by the Church. Thus I think it is arbitrary in a high degree to doubt that our Lord did institute this sacrament of perpetual memorial for His new Israel.[1]

But some more attention must be paid to these mysterious words "Take ye: this is my body which is for you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many." If we try to imagine the scene, we see that what we are witnessing is a rite of communion or "sharing together." That was the unmistakable meaning of the distribution of the one loaf and the drinking of the one cup. And it is a sacrament that is being instituted, in the sense that the purpose of the institution is the imparting not of physical nourishment, but of something which the bread and cup symbolize and with which they are somehow identified. So St. Paul interprets the rite: " The cup which we bless is a sharing together in the blood of Christ. The bread which we break is a sharing together in the body of Christ." It is sometimes suggested that " the body of Christ " may have been understood by St. Paul as the Church, which he calls the body of Christ. But this suggestion wholly breaks down before the parallelism of " the body " with " the blood." The body and the blood together must describe Christ's sacrificed humanity as that which is being imparted under the figure of bread and wine. I cannot see any possible source of this language except in the sacrificial system of the Jews. Christ is speaking of His body as being given in sacrifice for the people, and His blood as being shed in sacrifice for them—the ' blood ' meaning ' the life,' as in the case of the animals sacrificed under the ritual law, according to the saying in Leviticus[1]: " The life [soul] of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life [soul]."

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[1] On the force of τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, etc., see Dr. Lock in *Theol.*, November 1923, p. 284, "This is the passover which ye are to keep in memorial of me."

Now, there were recognized in the Jewish law many distinct classes of sacrifice, and of these one was the peace offering; and the characteristic of this large class of sacrifices was that the substance of the sacrifice was shared by the worshippers in a sacrificial meal. (This kind of sacrifice holds, as we know, a very important place, perhaps the chief place, in the institution of sacrifice as it appears all over the world.) What our Lord must have meant then by His words to His disciples, at once affirming the sacrifice of His body and blood, and calling upon them to feed upon it, was that His sacrifice of Himself was of the nature of the peace offerings in this respect, that it was to be shared by the worshippers, though in its purpose it was an atonement for sin. We shall remember that in the Epistle to the Hebrews the writer implies that the one atoning sacrifice for sin, offered on the cross and at the heavenly altar, is also to be partaken of by the worshippers. The members of the Christian Church in this respect have a higher privilege than belonged even to the priests under the law.[1]

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[1] xvii. 11; cf. ver. 14, " As to the life of all flesh, the blood thereof is all one with the life thereof: . . . the life of all flesh is the blood thereof"; cf. Gen. ix. 4," Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof."

There are many people who appear to resent the very idea that Christ should thus by the institution of the eucharist have connected the New Israel with the Old, as in other respects, so also in respect of the institution of sacrifice. But it is noticeable that our Lord, while He denounces the tradition of the Scribes and Pharisees and exalts the moral law above ceremonial observances, yet never by word or act shows any sign of disrespect to the temple worship. An attempt has been made to treat His 'cleansing of the temple' as a repudiation of the principle of animal sacrifices; but the attempt has no justification. And He appears to have attended the feasts and kept the passover; and He is recorded to have spoken with reverence of the altar, like a pious Jew.[2] Presumably He regarded the animal sacrifices as a divinely sanctioned institution which demanded fulfilment, and to which He Himself was to give fulfilment.

And if He intended His disciples to learn at the Last Supper that in some mysterious sense they were to receive into themselves His body and blood as spiritual nourishment—and this cannot be denied without violence to the evidence—then it is surely probable that the disciples had been prepared for this startling announcement, and that the discourse of St. John vi. rests on a historical basis. It is probable that the background of that discourse, as St. John gives it us, is sacrificial—that is to say, that when our Lord speaks of His "flesh" as not only to be the bread of life given *to* the world but also as given "*on behalf* of the life of the world,"[1] He is, as at the Last Supper, speaking of it, or of Himself, as to be offered in sacrifice. But, whether this is or is not the case, the whole point of this startling chapter is to insist that His flesh[2] and blood, which means His humanity—which can mean nothing else—is to nourish His people for eternal life; and the explanation of a thought so startling is at last offered by the instruction that they are not to think of His material flesh as they now see it, but of what He will be when He has returned to His heavenly state, and His flesh and blood will be "spirit and life."[3]

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[1] Heb. xiii. 10 f., with Westcott's notes. Also the Jews under the law were by no means to partake of the blood of the victim in any case.

[2] Matt. xxiii. 18, cf. v. 23; Mark i. 44; Luke xvii. 14.

But—to sum up—however much or however little the disciples at the Last Supper had minds prepared for the institution of this sacrament of Christ's body and blood, I cannot see what reasonable ground there is for doubting that Christ instituted it; also I cannot see what other interpretation can be put upon it than what St. Paul puts upon it, and that too in such terms as suggest that it was the accepted interpretation which he had no need to do more than recall to the minds of his converts—"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a sharing together in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a sharing together in the body of Christ?"; and, finally, I cannot see to what other source we can refer for the interpretation of this language of Christ about eating His body and drinking His blood except to the Jewish institutions of sacrifice, which were akin to those which prevailed all over the world, and which recognized as one at least of the purposes of sacrifice the feeding upon the victim by the whole group of worshippers or offerers, though by identifying Himself as the victim He gave to the ancient symbols a new and spiritual meaning. 'I am to become your sacrifice: by my body broken in death and my blood shed you are to be redeemed; and upon that sacrifice you are to feed: my sacrificed manhood is to be your spiritual nourishment.'

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[1] John vi. 51.

[2] I do not think *much* difference can be assigned to "flesh" as distinguished from "body," because both alike are put side by side with "blood."

[3] John vi. 61–4; cf. Burney, *Aramaic Original*, p. 108, who translates *τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λελάληκα ὑμῖν*, "The things about which I have been speaking to you." Cf. my *Dissertations*, App. C.

It is now often argued that the idea of feeding upon the flesh and blood[1] of Christ must have been derived from the Hellenistic mystery religions; and this is part of a much larger suggestion which we shall be considering in the next chapter. But—to anticipate what we shall be seeking to prove—as regards the institution of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, it will not help us. The idea of eating a sacrifice was indeed familiar to the Hellenistic world, as it also was to the Jews. And so long as men were able to believe that a plant or an animal was a god, they could entertain the idea of securing the divine virtue of the god by eating it. But the mysteries had long passed out of such a barbaric stage. Their religions were now anthropomorphic. And there is nothing discoverable in classical literature to lead us to suppose that the idea of *eating* any one of their divine heroes or saviour gods would have been tolerable to them. It would seem that our Lord must bear the burden of the startling language He chose to use alone. And it admits of no other interpretation than that He who was to inaugurate a new covenant with His people by the sacrifice of His life was also to be their spiritual food.

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[1] It has been matter of endless contention whether the Eucharist can rightly be called a sacrifice. I suppose that for the ancient world, Jewish or Greek, it would have been a sacrifice, simply because it was a feeding upon a sacrifice. That was one at least of the essential elements of sacrifice. And that we may feed on Him, Christ is there presented to us as sacrificed, in His body offered and His blood shed—"The Lamb as it had been slain."

Before we leave this subject let us remind ourselves that that which seems so difficult, if approached as an intellectual problem, has seemed quite otherwise to the hearts of Christians in all generations. It is not a barbaric instinct to which these words have appealed, but the highest spiritual aspirations of men, and " the Holy Communion " has created and nourished in all generations of Christians the sense of " Christ in us the hope of glory."

I do not think, then, that on a review of all this evidence there is any room for doubting that Jesus Christ did—not indeed found the Church, for it had been long in existence, but refounded it under a new covenant, and under new government, that of the apostles, and empowered by a new life, that of His own Spirit, instructed anew by His teaching and His death and resurrection, and equipped with certain outward rites or sacraments which, with the Scriptures, marked its continuity with the Old Israel.

Four remarks may be added in conclusion.

1. The faith of the first Christians in the guidance of the Spirit, as being really the guidance of Christ, was so intense that we should suppose they were not much inclined to distinguish in value between what was " ordained by Christ Himself " during His life on earth and what He was still ordaining from heaven. Nevertheless the things that Jesus began to do and teach while on earth remained determinative.

He could not have changed. Thus, before the Gospels were written, the greatest stress was evidently laid on His acts and words on earth. This is especially apparent in the writings of the apostle who had not companied with Him on earth. And the oral record of what Jesus had done and taught lies behind the written Gospels. Between A.D. 29 and A.D. 70 the conservative feeling radiating from those who were "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word" must have been a very stern restraint on the inventive power of the religious imagination.

2. The relation of the Church to the Kingdom of God is most easily understood when we view the Church, as historically we should, as in direct continuity with ancient Israel—as being in principle the same theocratic society, only refashioned and renewed. For the constant idea of the prophets of the Old Testament is that Israel is God's kingdom, the society in which God is the real king. Nevertheless there was a good time coming when God would manifest His kingdom in all the world and Israel would be glorified. This is what is meant in the New Testament by the coming of the Kingdom.

Only it appeared in the course of the apostolic experience that this coming was not to be one single act, or the matter of a single moment. In one sense Christ implied in His teaching that the Kingdom was already among men in virtue of His presence. In another sense it appeared that it was to come in His resurrection and glory and in the mission of the Spirit. In this sense the Church is even identified with the Kingdom, as already appears to be the case in the parable of the drag net and in the words of Christ to Peter, "I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."[1] In another and fuller sense the Kingdom comes only with the final and universal triumph of God in Christ—" His appearing and his kingdom." Thus "*non adhuc regnat hoc regnum.*" The Church now in the world represents the Kingdom and in a real sense *is* it ; but still it must pray " Thy kingdom come " ; and when that Kingdom comes in glory, the Church will pass into it as into something much greater than itself. This double feeling about the Church—as being, and also as not yet being, the Kingdom of God—accounts for the way in which from the first Christians both laboured to develop and organize the Church on earth, and yet eagerly expected the manifestation from heaven of something much vaster and more glorious.

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[1] Surely it is only so far as the Church *is* the Kingdom that Peter can have its keys. He can admit into the Church. But surely in the wider and final sense of the Kingdom the admission into it lies only in the judgement of God.

3. In the argument of this chapter I have appealed simply to historical considerations. But there is an appeal also open to us to common sense and universal experience. How can any spiritual movement due to the initiative of an individual—teacher or prophet—hope to maintain itself in being ? There are two chief means. The one is to embody the teaching in a book. This way of proceeding Jesus Christ did not adopt. The only book with which He left His Church was the, now confessedly imperfect, book of the Old Testament Scriptures, which had its value because it was prophetic, not because it was adequate. The other way of proceeding is to found an institution to embody and perpetuate the idea. Jesus Christ indeed did not need to originate an institution, for He found it in being—the Church of God which was the people of Israel ; but He needed profoundly to modify and refound it. This, we have sought to show, He did do in fact. But may we not say He *must*, as a wise man and wise teacher, have done something of the kind ? Can we imagine that He could have left His doctrines to float, so to speak, loose in the world ?

And in support of this argument I will not appeal to a theologian. I will appeal to Seeley's *Ecce Homo.* If anyone is disposed to doubt whether Christ is responsible for the Church—whether with the deepest deliberation He founded or refounded it—I could wish nothing better than that he should read this remarkable book; and the conviction which I think it will generate in him is not only that He did found it, but that as a wise master-builder He must have done so.

4. I suppose that the whole tendency of modern enquiry into the religions of the world is to prove their "group origin." They belong to the tribe or nation; and whatever personal religion they are capable of nourishing grows up under the shelter of the social institution. This was certainly so among the Jews. Thus if Jesus had made no provision for the future of His disciples, it may very rightly be argued that as Jews, believing themselves to be the believers in the true Messiah, they must have organized themselves as a Church; and that the natural tendency to organization, bred of their Jewish origin, would have been deepened, as Gentiles were incorporated, by the equally strong tendency to form religious organizations which characterized contemporary Hellenism. There is in fact no justification for putting the idea of Christ having instituted the Church into antagonism to the idea of natural circumstances having favoured its formation. Those who believe in Christ as God, believe also that God is at work in the processes of natural human development. The supernatural influence would have worked in with "the natural inclination which all men have unto sociable life." But contemporary critics have been seeking to persuade us that the genesis of the Church was purely natural, and that Christ neither provided for it nor was interested in it. And the object of this chapter has been to show that the

evidence condemns such a representation, not by any means to deny that the natural tendencies of the period, both Jewish and Gentile, promoted its development.

APPENDED NOTE A (see p. 658)

IS THE NEW TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY SUBSTANTIALLY ERRONEOUS?

In the *Church Quarterly* for April 1923 the Rev. W. Maurice Pryke has an interesting but surprising article in which he contends that the ascription to the Hebrew Scriptures of the prophecy of a suffering, dying, and then glorified Messiah, an ascription which in the Gospels is constantly attributed to our Lord Himself, and in the rest of the N.T. to the apostles, is quite unjustified by the facts. "Let us then admit unreservedly that no single passage of the O.T., whether from prophet or psalmist, can rightly be produced as a prediction, conscious or unconscious, of the sufferings, death, resurrection, exaltation, and return to judgement of the Messiah" (p. 125; cf. p. 127, "So far the Jews were in the right"). But it is astonishing that Mr. Pryke gives no consideration to Isa. liii. Certainly (see *Belief in Christ*, pp. 356 ff.) one main feature in the teaching of Christ was the importance given to the "suffering servant" as constituting an element of the greatest importance in the Old Testament picture of "him who was to come." Certainly our Lord took the "suffering servant" of Isaiah (and also the glorified form "like unto a son of man" in Daniel vii.) into His conception of the Christ. He regarded it as moral blindness to omit the figure of the sufferer from the picture. And undoubtedly the intensely individualized picture of Isa. liii. does describe one who redeems by suffering and death and passes through contemptuous rejection and death to glory. (See Driver's *Isaiah*, in "Men of the Bible," pp. 177–8 and 152 ff., quoted in *Belief in Christ*, pp. 355 f.) And round this passage group themselves a number of other pictures of suffering servants of God, in the Psalms especially (xxii. and lxix.), which emphasize the idea that the true servant of God must expect rejection, suffering, and ignominy in the fulfilment of his mission. In a few of the Psalms I do not think it is possible to doubt that the idea is presented of the faithful servant living through death (see an article by Dr. E. H. Askwith in *Expositor*, January 1923, "The Hope of Immortality in the Psalter" and Dr. Briggs's Notes on Ps. xvi. 10–11, xvii. 15, xlix. 15, lxxiii. 23 f.). The question whether the contention of our Lord and His apostles, that the death and resurrection and glory of the Christ was prophesied in the Old Testament, was justified in fact, depends *in the main* on the question whether Isaiah liii., and the Psalms which group themselves round this central conception, really ought to be taken into the picture of "him who was to come," that is, the Christ. See further (on Zech. xi. xii.) *Can We then Believe*, n. 9, pp. 198 ff.

APPENDED NOTE B (see p. 666)

THE RELATION OF ST. PETER TO THE OTHER APOSTLES

This is a subject which has been blackened with controversy, so that it is difficult to gain or keep a free mind about it. The Roman Church has appropriated the Petrine texts, in much the same way as Protestant tradition has appropriated the Epistle to the Galatians. Yet on consideration we do not find either that the Roman contention is supported by the New Testament as a whole or the Lutheran individualism by St. Paul's Epistles.

1. The prominence of Peter and his leadership of the apostles must surely be admitted. But, apart from any question of his office, his prominence is due to what one may call his forthcomingness. When our Lord asked the great question, "Who do ye say that I am?" Peter was forward to answer for all. He was their spokesman. Immediately after his confession, followed in St. Matthew by Christ's startling words of benediction, he again was forward in vehement deprecation of the Lord's prophecy of His rejection and crucifixion. Accordingly to him

also was addressed the tremendous rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan." But it was not meant for him alone. All the rest probably shared his mind. Again, it was he who was forward in professions of loyalty just before the passion, which accounts for two solemn warnings addressed to him personally—"Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have *you*, that he might sift *you* as wheat; but I made supplication for *thee*, that *thy* faith fail not: and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke xxii. 31–2). "Simon, sleepest thou? couldest thou not watch with me one hour?" (Mark xiv. 37). In the event he alone denied his Lord, but they all forsook him and fled. Then when, in Galilee after the Resurrection, he is solemnly cross-questioned by the Lord as to his love for Him, and solemnly restored to his pastoral function or apostolate—for surely the Fathers are right in so interpreting the scene [1]—he is still a representative man, representative of the others with whom he shares the pastoral commission, both in their weakness and in their penitence.

We should notice that the *representative* character of St. Peter is a great point with the Fathers—"gerebat personam ecclesiae," as St. Augustine says. (See Denny, p. 60.)

2. But also he is the leader among the apostles. If this is more obvious in St. Matthew than elsewhere, that is perhaps because the tendency of the Jewish Christian to exalt St. James into a "bishop of bishops" had to be rebuked. But there can be no mistake about his leadership. The disciples are called "those about Peter" in the uncanonical ending of St. Mark's Gospel, and "the disciples and Peter" is in Mark xvi. 7 the name for the whole group. Also his leadership after the Ascension is obvious in the Acts. But nothing can have happened, we must remember, to prevent James and John from seeking the foremost seats of honour in the day of Christ's glory (Mark x. 37), or the whole group discussing "which of them is accounted to be greatest" (Luke xxii. 24). The commission promised,

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[1] See *Roman Catholic Claims*, chap. v, pp. 80, 81; and with much greater fullness, Denny's *Papalism*, § 16, pp. 65 ff.

not given, to Peter alone, in Matt. xvi. is very impressive. But it must be remembered that the commission actually given in John xx. to the whole group is in substance the same. The keys to open and shut and the authority to bind and loose (which go together) are both involved in the commission to absolve and retain sins. The Fathers seem to hold it as unquestionable that the power of the keys is nothing else than the power to bind and loose and to absolve and retain sins, and that it was given to all the apostles: see Denny, p. 57. Still we ask, Is not the stewardship given to Peter something unique and personal, like the stewardship of his Old Testament prototypes, Eliakim and Shebna? And in St. Luke xii. when Peter asks the question, "Speakest thou this [about the stewardship] to us, or even unto all?" though our Lord's reply is addressed to them all ("I say unto *you*"), yet it has been suggested that the stewardship is still spoken of as the office of a single person. There is something that is ambiguous in the Gospels, and we naturally go to the Acts and the Epistles for elucidation of the ambiguity.

3. And the Acts and the Epistles, it seems to me, negative the idea that any special office, other than a leadership among equals, belongs to St. Peter. In St. Paul's the "stewardship" belongs to all the apostles (1 Cor. iv. 1), or indeed to all the presbyter-bishops (Tit. i. 7). His language about St. Peter seems positively to exclude any recognition on his part of any authority belonging to him which he himself and the other apostles did not share equally. He ranks "James, Cephas, and John" together as "they who were reputed to be pillars." He sees Peter twice at Jerusalem with some others "reputed to be somewhat," but "they added nothing to him." His own apostolic authority he has received neither "from men nor through man." He rebuked Cephas to the face when he stood self-condemned for inconsistency at Antioch (Gal. i. and ii.). When he is speaking about the Corinthian parties "of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas" (1 Cor. i. 12), there is no hint of superiority of one to the other. All the apostles had, it seems, the same authority under Christ the head. The idea of a headship on earth appears to be excluded.

Under Christ are "first apostles," etc. (Eph. iv. 9–16). It is the "holy apostles and prophets" who are the foundation stones of the Church (Eph. ii. 20), as in the vision of John in the Apocalypse the wall of the New Jerusalem has "twelve foundations, which are the twelve apostles." There is no room left for any Petrine authority, except that which he shared with all the others. Nor is there any suggestion of more than an original leadership in the Acts of the Apostles. When the Church "sent down" Peter and John to Samaria, they are sending seemingly two equal officers to complete what Philip could not complete. Peter opens the door to the Gentiles, but Paul bears the brunt of keeping it open. He appears to eclipse Peter, just as the apostolate to the Gentiles which belonged to Paul and Barnabas was so much more important than the apostolate to the circumcision which was allotted to James, Cephas, and John. In the Council at Jerusalem, Peter gives crucial testimony, but James presides and gives the verdict. And there is no hint of special authority in St. Peter's Epistle.

4. The later witness of the Fathers (which I have sought to summarize in *Roman Catholic Claims*, but which is to be found much more fully in Denny, *op. cit.*, and in Puller's *Primitive Saints and the See of Rome*) is not at all favourable (if one excludes the testimony of Rome itself) to the Romanist interpretation of the Petrine texts. This is not the place to speak of the claim made for the transmission of power supposed to be Peter's to his successors in the see of Rome, of which, of course, in the New Testament there is no hint.

APPENDED NOTE C (see p. 667)

THE AUTHORITY OF AN APOSTLE

The authority of an apostle, as St. Paul represents it, is the authority (ἐξουσία) of a regular officer of an organized society. As being such, he can claim support for himself and his wife, if he is married, in the churches of his foundation; and that by the ordinance of Christ

(1 Cor. ix. 1–14; 2 Thess. iii. 9). His mission, given him by Christ, is to preach the Gospel (1 Cor. i. 17) and to "edify" the churches, but also, where necessary, to exercise sharp discipline (2 Cor. x. 8, xiii. 10). Apostles are "ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries [revealed secrets] of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1). St. Paul also speaks of his ministry in sacerdotal terms. "I have written to you," he says (Rom. xv. 15), "with a certain freedom in virtue of my commission as a priest of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the service of God's gospel."[1] In effect, then, the office of the apostle is the full pastoral office to feed and to govern the flock of Christ, with the special qualification of a founder or initiator; and it is essentially a world-wide office, though practically arrangements have been made that some apostles should go to the Jews and others to the Gentiles. It authorizes St. Paul to judge and excommunicate an offending Christian—if possible in union with the local church to which the offender belongs—and to absolve another who has repented—"in the name of the Lord Jesus" or "in the person of Christ" (1 Cor. v. 3; 2 Cor. ii. 10). St. Paul, we observe, does not like exercising mere authority, but prefers to work by persuasion. Thus he tells Philemon (ver. 8) that he "exhorts" him to do the right thing by Onesimus, but that he has full authority in Christ to command him.

The apostolate is the chief office in the Church, set there by God or by Christ, the head of the Church. He gave "some as apostles"—"first, apostles" (Eph. iv. 11, 1 Cor. xii. 28). It is "neither from men, nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father" (Gal. i. 1). St. Paul himself received his apostolate from the glorified Christ in heaven, whom he saw. But he was appointed "out of due time." There were "apostles before him" who had been apostles when Christ appeared to them after the Resurrection, and must therefore have been appointed during His life on earth (1 Cor. xv. 5–8; Gal. i. 17).

Words could not express more simply or clearly than those of St. Paul that the authority of the apostolate did not accrue to it by the voice of the Church, or under the pressure of circumstances, or by personal influence. It was an original institution in the Church, of Christ's creation, the same in the case of St. Paul as in that of the original Twelve.

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[1] Dr. James Moffatt's translation.

In the Acts we perceive that it is the function of the apostle to convey to the baptized the gift of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands [1]; and in the Acts and the Pastoral Epistles it appears to be also the function of an apostle—in some kind of undefined co-operation with the local presbyter-bishops—to perpetuate the ministry in the Church, again through the laying on of hands, viewed sacramentally as a means of conveying a special gift of the Holy Spirit. But about this we shall have occasion to speak in a later chapter.

APPENDED NOTE D (see p. 669)

THE COMMISSION IN ST. JOHN XX. 21–3

The general sense of this passage seems strongly to suggest that it is an *apostolate* which is being conferred, which is a continuation of Christ's apostolate. Cf. the earlier commission to the Twelve (St. Matt. x. 16; cf. Luke ix. 2), " Behold, I send you forth," and the words in the prayer of our Lord before His passion, " As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world " (John xvii. 18). In a sense the commission is to the Church as a whole; but the sending of men into the world as evangelists is especially applicable to the apostles, though the Seventy may have shared their mission. In the latter part of St. John, however, " the disciples " appears to mean the Twelve [2]; and the nature of the commission strongly suggests administrative officers and not merely ordinary members of a society.

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[1] If Dr. Swete is right in interpreting Gal. iii. 5 (" He that supplieth to you the Spirit and worketh miracles among you ") of the apostle, not of God directly, then we should have a reference to " confirmation "; but I do not feel sure that Dr. Swete is right. We notice that in the Bezan text of Acts xi. 17 Peter protests: " Who was I that I could withstand God, that *I should not give them the Holy Spirit* when they believed on him ? " Cf. p. 752, n. 2.

[2] Cf. Westcott on St. John xxi. 1, " By the disciples is meant in all probability the apostles." Cf. *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 207, n. 2.

Apparently there were other people present (Luke xxiv. 33), but the special apostolic commission may very well have been given in the presence of others. The commission in St. Matt. xxviii. 16 is specially said to be given "to the eleven disciples" (cf. [St. Mark] xvi. 14–15), but it must probably be identified with the appearance "to above five hundred brethren at once" recorded by St. Paul.

Dr. Hort, whose great name is chiefly quoted for making the commission general, seems to me, as to Dr. Mason, in his posthumous work on *The Christian Ecclesia* (Macmillan, 1897), greatly to underrate the evidence that the apostles were understood from the beginning to be the divinely appointed rulers of the Church. See *The Church and the Ministry* (Longmans), App. Note M, p. 379. But it should be noted that in respect of the apostolic commission recorded in St. Matthew and St. John, Dr. Hort speaks very hesitatingly. "Doubt is possible"; "Granting that it was probably to the Eleven that our Lord directly and principally spoke on both these occasions (and even to them alone when He spoke the words at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel), yet it has still to be considered in what capacity they were addressed by Him." My contention is that it is plainly as officers of the future community and not merely as witnesses or disciples. I think the free and easy manner in which it is commonly taken for granted that the commission was given to the Church as a whole augurs a considerable amount of wilfulness of mind.

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CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY AND THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS

So far what we have done is this: we have found in the Acts and Epistles of the New Testament a religion of the Spirit which is also a religion of the Church—for the only recognized sphere of the Spirit's action is the Church of the believers in Jesus as the Christ and Lord. And the Church we found to regard itself as no new foundation, but as the ancient people of God—the Israel of the prophets—reformed on the basis of faith in Jesus as the promised Christ, and admitting Gentile and Jew on equal terms into its fellowship. And we saw convincing reason to believe that Jesus Himself did regard His disciples as the only true Israel, and that He was at pains to re-equip this renewed Israel, this new "household of God," with certain stewards or officers in the persons of the Twelve and with certain symbolic rites or sacraments of incorporation and fellowship. Thus the religion of the Spirit in the Church appears in the New Testament as the culmination of the religion of Israel. "Salvation is of the Jews." This is undoubtedly the account which the New Testament gives of itself and its origin.

We must not, however, altogether exclude the notion of the incorporation into the religious development of Israel of elements from the religions of other nations. The truly original features of the Jewish religion, i.e. the prophetic doctrine about God and man, and the social and religious life based upon it, did in fact grow in the heart of a Semitic tribe or group of tribes more or less possessed already of the common Semitic type of religious ideas, traditions, and institutions. What we discern in the Old Testament is that the prophetic doctrine succeeded in transforming and correcting these ideas, traditions, and institutions, and so making of them a quite new thing. And later, when the developed religion of the prophets was brought into close contact with Babylonian, Persian, and Greek influences, it appears to have incorporated elements from them, such as appear in the later Jewish teaching about angels and about Satan, and in the doctrine of the Divine Wisdom immanent and operative in all nature, but not to such an extent as to imperil the distinctive character of the prophetic doctrine.[1] We may find indeed among the Jews such an amalgamation of the prophetic faith with alien features as seriously to corrupt the tradition. Thus we may stand in doubt whether the Essene communities, contemporary with our Lord, were not more Oriental than Jewish in their religion[2]; or whether some of the Apocalypses do not seriously pervert the expectation of the prophets.[1] But this was not the case with the religion of the Old Testament as we see it passing into the New. That is essentially the religion of the prophets, and of the ceremonial and civil law as reconstructed under the leadership of the prophets.

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[1] Thus we may take it for granted that the later Jewish teaching about angels was due in part to Persian influences, yet it was held on a basis of belief in the unique majesty of God, due to the prophetic teaching, so that no "worship of angels" (Col. ii. 18) could be tolerable to a Jew who knew his Bible. And the later doctrine of Satan as a rebel angel who had by his rebellion become the adversary of God, as compared to the earlier doctrine of Satan as one among the sons of God (see A. B. Davidson's *Theol. of the O.T.*, pp. 300 ff.), was really an inevitable outcome of the fuller recognition, under the stress of the prophetic teaching, of the divine goodness, which made it impossible to think that the adversary and the tempter could be among the agents of God's will (see Jas. i. 13). And the idea of "the Wisdom" of God—the "immanent God"—learned in part from the Greeks, was an outcome of the teaching of the divine omnipresence as seen in Ps. cxxxix. The assimilated ideas maintained the prophetic teaching and in no wise corrupted it.

[2] Hastings, *Dict. of the Bible*, s.v. "Essenes."

When we have passed from the Old Testament to the New we find certainly a similar process of assimilation going on. Confessedly Christianity 'borrowed' from Greek philosophy,[2] and the process is already beginning in St. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews and St. John, and is still more marked in the early Apologists (to go no farther). Again the question arises—how far did the process go? Is the Christianity of the Epistles really in all its substance the religion of the prophets, consummated in Jesus Christ and realized in the mission from Him of the Holy Spirit, as it obviously claims to be, or is it an amalgamation of Jewish and Hellenistic elements in about equal proportion? In particular, is all that has been associated with the religion of the Spirit in the Church—the idea of the Spirit of God, or Christ by the Spirit, indwelling the community and its individual members, they in Him and He in them, the idea of the sacraments as channels or instruments of spiritual grace, accomplishing man's regeneration and re-creation by incorporation into Christ and feeding upon Him, and the idea of a priestly ministry divinely appointed to teach and to safeguard divine mysteries,—is all this group of ideas which has largely constituted the substance of Catholicism, as it appears in history from St. Paul downwards, really *not* due to the prophets or to Jesus Christ or to Hebrew tradition at all, but to Hellenism? Was it even the case that the spirit of Hellenism passed in such full flood into the first Christian communities outside Palestine, with the influx of the Gentiles, as really to transform the religion of Jesus substantially into a mystery religion on the Hellenistic pattern?

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 317–21.

[2] See above, pp. 638 f., 651 f.

This I suppose to be at the present moment the most formidable of the proposed 'explanations' of Christianity and, owing to its elusiveness, the most difficult to deal with. We have always been accustomed to see in the Gnostic sects, in marked distinction from the early Catholic Church, amalgamations of Hellenism with Jewish and Christian ideas—a group of amalgamations in which Hellenism had a substantial victory. But is it after all the case that as between the Gnostic sects and the orthodox Church, even the Church as St. Paul expounded it, it is only a question of more or less—that even the Church as St. Paul expounded it is substantially Hellenistic, and so far quite alien to the mind and intention of Jesus of Nazareth?

In part we have had to face this theory already—as when it would attribute the title "Lord" as applied to Christ to Hellenistic influences, assimilating Christ to Serapis or Adonis or the like 'saviours,' and we found the attribution really quite groundless.[1] Again, we had to consider the attempt to detach from Christ the institution of the sacrament of His body and blood, and to present it as an element of contemporary mysticism which passed into St. Paul's mind in a vision—a communication which he believed to be from the Lord Jesus, but which was really due to the 'sacramental' atmosphere of the Hellenistic world; and this interpretation again we found we must decisively reject.[2] But it does not suffice to deal with this theory of the Hellenizing of Christianity piecemeal. We must seek to envisage the position as a whole. It presents itself from two sides: from the side of the anthropologists or students of comparative religions, as represented, for instance, by Sir James Frazer in *The Golden Bough*; and from the side of students of the Hellenistic movements and literature, amongst whom Reitzenstein is the most conspicuous.[1] And we will consider Sir James Frazer's position first.

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 398 ff., Note B.

[2] See *op. cit.*, pp. 395 f., Note A, and in this volume see pp. 674 f.

I

Sir James Frazer is among the most distinguished of the anthropologists who have devoted themselves to the study of comparative mythology; and after thirty years of laborious investigation, which began from the legends connected with the priest of Nemi and has spread over the whole of our globe, he has recently condensed into a single volume the evidence, reasonings and conclusions of the twelve volumes previously published, under the general heading of *The Golden Bough*.[2] Perhaps the most interesting feature of these widespread enquiries is the disclosure of the deep impression made on primitive man, in widely separated portions of the world, by the seeming death of nature in the autumn and its revival in spring, or in tropical countries by its death under the tyranny of the sun and its revival with the rains. Sometimes we see men apparently afraid that nature, on whose bounty their life depended, was in real danger of death, and devoting themselves by 'sympathetic magic' to keeping it alive or renewing its life. Then, as the regular recurrence of the seasons made this fear absurd, we see them none the less impressed with the constant spectacle of Mother Nature living by dying, and conscious also of their own kinship with nature in this respect. Thus in some forms of barbaric nature worship, some animal or plant, which is the representative of nature, is worshipped as a divine being, and some individual specimen of the proper species is consecrated and eaten by its worshippers as a religious act, in the belief that its life and strength will so pass into them. So we get religion associated with sacrifice and 'sacramental' feeding.[1] And as by a nearly universal instinct men either shrink from death and desire to perpetuate their lives, or believe that the human spirit does in fact survive death, so the hope grows that by eating their god who lives by dying—the corn-spirit, for example—they can secure themselves against death or win a happy state of existence after death. This outcome of nature worship seems to be proved in certain cases and is very interesting.

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, p. 429.

[2] *The Golden Bough*, a study in magic and religion, by Sir James George Frazer, F.R.S., F.B.A., Abridged Edition (Macmillan, 1922).

Then when religion passes into an 'anthropomorphic' stage, that is when the gods are figured in quasi-human forms, we have the same fundamental fact of the death and revival of nature figured in myths of the death and recovery of some divine or semi-divine man, beloved of a goddess (Mother Nature). Thus Tammuz, whom the Greeks called Adonis, beloved of the Babylonian goddess

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[1] There is good evidence for this "sacramental" feeding in the ritual of the Aztecs (see Frazer, *op. cit.*, pp. 488 ff.) and in some tribes of Northern Europe. But in Frazer's chap. L, on "Eating the God," most of the examples are very questionable. We remember that when the Jews ate their peace offerings, they attached no such idea to the eating. "Upon data so fragmentary and uncertain," Frazer remarks in one instance (p. 491), "it is impossible to build with confidence." The same remark might be often repeated. He quotes from Cicero (without a reference), p. 499: "When we call corn Ceres and wine Bacchus we use a common figure of speech; but do you imagine that anybody is so insane as to believe that the thing he feeds upon is a god?" Cicero would have spoken differently if he had had any idea that the common people did so believe or ever had so believed. There is no evidence that when the worshippers of Attis ate out of a drum and drank out of a cymbal they had any such belief, or when the votaries of Eleusis absorbed the sacred drink (κυκέων). But the kind of belief may have been widespread wherever the god was *identified* with an animal or plant: see further App. Note, pp. 725 f.

Ishtar or Aphrodite, and Attis, beloved of the Phrygian Cybele, and the Egyptian demi-god Osiris, beloved of Isis, were beautiful young men killed by accident, or self-mutilation, or murder, and then in some way brought back from death or made lords of the dead. In each case there were solemn rites commemorating the divine hero's death, as you read in Ezekiel of the idolatrous women in Jerusalem "weeping for Tammuz," and the sorrow of the devotees was turned into joy in the contemplation of his life renewed and the power that was now his. And there were 'mysteries' or secret cults[1] associated with these divine couples by which the initiates were assured that they too would pass through death to life. Thus one of the sacred hymns of Attis said, "Take courage, O ye initiates, because the god is saved; so to you also after troubles shall be salvation"; or a hymn of Osiris said, "As truly as Osiris lives, he also shall live; as truly as Osiris is not dead, shall he [the initiate] not die; as truly as Osiris is not annihilated, shall he not be annihilated." And these mystery-cults were celebrated with an imposing or frenzied ritual, and were in charge of special priesthoods.

The cults just named were oriental in origin; but there were like cults, which were of very old standing in Greece. Thus the divine Dionysus or Zagreus had been murdered in the form of a bull and raised to life again by his father Zeus, and in the festival of his commemoration the frenzied worshippers tore a live bull to pieces with their teeth and perhaps originally believed themselves to eat their god.[1] And, in spite of the savage origin of this cult, a man as refined as Plutarch can comfort his wife over the death of their infant daughter with the hope of immortality assured to them by the mysteries of Dionysus into which they were both initiated.[2] And the mysteries of Eleusis, besides incorporating the Dionysus myth, were based upon the story of Persephone who was carried off by Pluto to Hades, and won back again, at least for two-thirds of the year, by her mother Demeter (Mother Earth). And there seems to be no doubt that all these gods or semi-divine beings, Oriental, Egyptian, or Greek, rescued from death and promoted to glory, were, in more or less thinly-veiled disguise, the corn-spirit or god of vegetation in some form. It is the death and resurrection of nature which lies at the root of all these worships.

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[1] Perhaps the best and most trustworthy source of information on these cults is Cumont's *Religions orientales dans le paganisme romain* (*Oriental Religions:* Engl. trans., 1911, Chicago Open Court Publishing Co., and Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London). Dr. Percy Gardner's *Religious Experience of St. Paul*, chap. iv (Williams & Norgate), is also suggestive; and indeed the subject is now one of widespread interest among the learned and is becoming popularized.

Acquaintance with these mystery religions shows that their ideas and rites were at bottom barbarous and obscene.[3] Nevertheless, as the established State religions of Greece and Rome became discredited and abandoned, these mystery religions took their place in the affections of the people, and, in spite of official resistance, became the fashion among religious-minded people, and even among the later philosophers. The mood of the world had become a mood of pessimism. Men were oppressed with a sense of overhanging fate and with a feeling of the pollution of physical life. In this atmosphere all sorts of superstitions flourished, and a wide welcome was given to mysteries which promised their associates release and immortality, and fellowship with a divine being through the medium of initiations and symbolic rites, even though their origins might be barbarous and degrading.

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[1] See, however, below, p. 725.

[2] *Consol. ad ux.*, 10: τὰ μυστικὰ σύμβολα τῶν περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον ὀργιασμῶν ἃ σύνισμεν ἀλλήλοις οἱ κοινωνοῦντες.

[3] And in great part they remained so: see Strabo (born about A.D. 64), *Geogr.*, xii, 2, 3, and xii, 3, 32, and 36, as to the accompaniments of the worship at Comana in Cappadocia, and Comana in Pontus, and Corinth. The degrading effect of the myths and rites upon the mass of men is also admitted in one of the few classical books about the mysteries—Plutarch's *de Iside et Osiride*. He wishes to give the myth and the ritual alike a philosophical meaning; but he is quite explicit about the actual facts: see capp. 20, 35, 68 (end), 70, 71.

It is easy to use language which assimilates these mythological mystery religions to the Christian creed and rites. Thus Frazer, though he has abandoned an extreme form of the mythical theory which at one time he put forward to account for the crucifixion of Jesus,[1] does not scruple to use this kind of language abundantly. Thus—"The god [Osiris] who annually died and rose again from the dead"; "As Osiris died and rose again from the dead, so all men hoped to rise again like him from death to life eternal"; "He gave his own body to feed the people; he died that they might live"; "The fast which accompanied the mourning for the dead god [Attis] may perhaps have been designed to prepare the body of the communicant for the reception of the blessed sacrament"; "A man-god slain to take away the misfortunes of the people"; "The good god [Saturn] who gave his life for the world." And of course the virginal conception of Jesus is regarded as a feature in this assimilation. "His [Attis'] birth is said to have been miraculous. His mother Nana was a virgin." Again a parallel to Christian ideas is found in the remoter East. "Thus through the mist of ages the tragic figure of the Pope of Buddhism—God's vicar on earth for Asia—looms dim and sad as the man-god who bore his people's sins, the good shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep."[2] Besides all this, Frazer is constantly pointing out how the popular observances of Christian festivals show obvious connexion with the ancient pagan feasts which they superseded.

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[1] See *Golden Bough*, vol. ix of the original work, p. 412.

[2] See *op. cit.*, pp. 325, 347, 367, 376, 351, 586, 347, 574.

How all this language of Frazer's impresses people is shown from an incidental remark of Mr. Bertrand Russell[1]: "Sir J. G. Frazer in his *Golden Bough* has shown that most of the elements of Christianity are derived from worship of the spirit of vegetation, the religion invented in the infancy of agriculture to insure the fertility of the soil."

I will give one more instance of this assimilation—from Loisy.[2] He thus summarizes St. Paul's conception of his Lord. "He was a saviour-god, after the manner of an Osiris, an Attis, a Mithra. Like them he belonged by his origin to the celestial world; like them he had made his appearance on the earth; like them he had accomplished a work of universal redemption, efficacious and typical; like Adonis, Osiris, and Attis he had died a violent death, and like them he had been restored to life; like them he had prefigured in his lot that of the human beings who should take part in his worship, and commemorate his mystic enterprise; like them he had predestined, prepared, and assured the salvation of those who became partakers in his passion." This suggested assimilation of Christian beliefs and processes to those of Oriental mysteries—which is just now very popular—we must attentively examine. But first of all let us make four important concessions to those who make such suggestions, if "concessions" is the right word to describe what is very cordially made.

The first is that, if we believe in one God—the common Father of all—who has all through human history been at work in the heart of man and has nowhere left Himself without witness, we shall not be surprised to find all the world over ideas in the minds of even barbarous tribes which we shall recognize as akin, even if remotely akin, to the ideas of incarnation and atonement and divine fellowship which we associate in their highest form with Jesus Christ and His redemption of man. So far from being shocked to find anticipations of such ideas even in the religion of savages, we ought to be eager to recognize them, (1) as evidence of the unity of the human race, and (2) as a sort of prophecy. (1) No one can read the evidence of the beliefs and customs of primitive men all the world over, as Sir James Frazer has accumulated it, without being deeply impressed with the sense of identity in human sentiment and aspiration everywhere, and feeling how naturally religion in all parts of the world takes on a 'sacramental' form, that is, expresses itself in rites and ceremonies which are believed to convey some sort of spiritual influence. Certainly, we feel, we are "of one blood" even with Aztecs and Australian bushmen. (2) No one can believe that God has a purpose for man, which is ultimately to be realized in and through Jesus Christ, without welcoming the signs that, even in a savage form, aspiration was being evoked which was one day to find satisfaction in a form from which all savagery had been purged away. Thus we should examine the connexion of Christian ideas and institutions with those of the pagan world quite without prejudice. And I think that anyone who takes an unprejudiced view of the circumstances of early Christianity will admit that the 'mystery religions' of the empire created a sort of widespread spiritual appetite which Christianity showed itself better able than anything else to satisfy: but of this I shall say something more before I have done.

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[1] *The Prospects of Industrial Civilization*, p. 47.

[2] *Hibbert Journal*, October 1911, p. 51. The foundations of such a theory are laid in *Les Mystères païens*, etc., referred to later.

Secondly, we shall (with St. Chrysostom) recognize that Jewish institutions—such as temple and sacrifices and festivals and sacred dresses and taboos—had their origin in the common stock of Semitic customs or ideas. The evidence of this is clearly to be found in the study of the earliest layer of the Old Testament literature; and as the Christian institutions or ideas were based upon the Jewish, so they were, even in virtue of their Hebrew origin, very remotely based upon the common stock of human religions.

Thirdly—in view of Frazer's tendency to argue from the dates and observances of the Church festivals—let it be recognized that when Christianity came out into the world and was making its way to become the established religion, it found certain annual festivals in possession of mankind, such as the festival of the winter solstice, the spring festival, and the midsummer festival, associated with moments in the annual course of the sun or of the crops. These were natural festivals, corrupted no doubt with much superstition and vice, but too dear to the hearts of the people to be easily suppressed. No wonder then if the Church, having its own spring festival, with its date determined by the Jewish Passover, instead of entering into rivalry with the old festivals, sought to superimpose the new Christian feast upon the old and let the new Christian ideas banish the old vices and superstitions. So in England they identified the Paschal festival with the old pagan spring festival of "Easter" and even retained the old name—as Bede says, "giving to the old feast a new consecration." So the festival of St. John the Baptist was used to give a new meaning to the old midsummer celebration. So, it may be (but this is not at all certain) the date of Christmas was fixed to correspond with the festivals of the winter solstice.[1]

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[1] See Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, pp. 256 ff.

Fourthly, there can be no doubt that, when Christianity became the religion of the Empire and began to be the only safe religion to profess, and a little later was accepted by barbarous races in mass at the bidding of their chiefs, a great deal of pagan superstition passed inside the Church. With such corruptions of the tradition we are not yet concerned. For some three centuries Christianity had been kept relatively pure by the danger of professing it. And it is only with the religion of the early centuries, and especially with the religion of the New Testament, that we are concerned.

But when due account has been taken of all this, it must be admitted that Frazer and Loisy are behaving very unscientifically in relying upon similarities of language—and sometimes, it must be added, very forced similarities—as an argument for similarity of origin, without any real regard to the source of the language in each case.

Thus though, remotely hidden, the origin of the Jewish festivals of the Passover and Pentecost and Tabernacles may lie with a Semitic nature worship, based upon the decay and revival of nature, such origin appears to have been utterly forgotten by the Jews, who for centuries before Christ had retained no traces of nature worship, but held it in abhorrence. And the Jewish belief in the resurrection of the dead had not arisen in any connexion with the life of nature, but out of the belief in God and His justice and the relation of the soul to God.

And when the belief in resurrection among the Jews received its confirmation in the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the belief in His resurrection was wholly alien from any idea of ‘corn-spirits’ or gods of vegetation. Nor do the anthropomorphic legends of Osiris and the rest suggest the conception of resurrection as the Christians understood it. Some of these wholly mythical hero-gods[1] were returned from the world of the dead by the decree of Zeus for part of the year, like Adonis and Persephone; and the fragments of the murdered and dismembered Osiris, re-collected by the loving search of Isis, were remade into an Osiris who became the Lord of the dead. The Christian word "resurrection" with its very concrete associations can hardly be properly applied to such vaguely conceived returns of souls from the world of the dead or glorifications of a dead hero in Hades.

Again, there is no suggestion in any of these myths, as the ancients give them us, of a "redeemer-god" or a "saviour-god" who had come from heaven to save mankind by the sacrifice of his life. These myths are concerned (for instance) with beautiful youths, loved by goddesses, who were put to death by a wild beast or by suicide or murder, and were themselves saved and rescued from death by one of the higher gods, yielding to the importunity of the divine lover. There is not a trace of the Saviour-God who came down to earth and sacrificed Himself that men might live. The passage in Frazer in which such a rôle is assigned to Saturn is exceedingly forced, and based on a more than precarious idea that Saturn in a certain rite of the Saturnalia was regarded as sacrificed apparently to himself.[2] As for the strange sentences about the Thibetan Lama,[3] one has only to read the preceding pages to realize how little they are based upon. There was indeed in the Prometheus myth, as Aeschylus treated it, the idea of the self-sacrifice of a semi-divine hero for the good of men, side by side with that of the jealousy and cruelty of the higher gods, but it inaugurated no cult and had no apparent influence.

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[1] Plutarch, we notice, *de Isid. et Osir.*, cap. 11, repudiates with horror the idea of the myth being true—*δεῖ μηδὲν οἴεσθαι τούτων . . . γεγονὸς οὕτω καὶ πεπραγμένον.* Cf. capp. 21 ff.

[2] Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 586.

[3] p. 574.

Nor, again, is there any justification for language which finds in these nature mysteries a counterpart to the Christian idea of communion in the body and blood of Christ. There is nothing to suggest the eating of the god, except at the stage of religion where the plant or animal is crudely believed to be a god. But this stage had long been outgrown in the anthropomorphic myths, and there is nothing to suggest the "man-god" feeding his people with his own substance.[1]

Finally, it is true that the mother of Attis is said to have "conceived by putting a ripe almond or pomegranate in her bosom"; and there are of course multitudes of legends of "miraculous births" by the intercourse of gods with women, but they suggest nothing in the Bible except the single fragment of unassimilated mythology in Gen. vi. 1–6. And if the presence of this passage in the sacred books of Israel has any purpose, it must be to make it plain that all such ideas could be associated only with what was disastrously evil, and could enter in no wise into the purpose of God. We must agree with Harnack about the virginal conception of Christ—that "the conjecture that the idea of His birth from a virgin is a heathen myth which was received by Christians contradicts the entire earliest development of the Christian tradition."[2]

II

Now let us recall to our minds the distinctive qualities of the Christian religion, as it appeared in the first churches of apostolic foundation, and especially, where we know most about it, in the churches of St. Paul—the distinctive qualities of the religion, which both kept it separate from all the religions of the empire in a jealous aloofness which was the cause of their hostility to it, and also force us to recognize its uniqueness as a historical religion.

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[1] See Appended Note A, p. 725, where this is discussed at some length.

There was nothing in the Hellenistic world to be compared to the Jewish theology of the One God, the Creator, either in its definiteness of teaching or clearness of outline. It was a doctrine which in the race of Israel had struggled for centuries against the native tendencies of the people, and finally, through the depth of a seeming failure, had passed into control of the nation and all its concerns, as the one and only word of God. Then on the basis of this definite self-revelation of the one God (as it claimed to be) the religion of Israel had assumed still more definite content in Jesus the Christ. Here was one who was unmistakably man, the Son of Man, who had recently lived a human life, and proclaimed a certain teaching, maintained in careful remembrance, and had died a malefactor's death at the will of His misguided people and at the hands of a recent Roman magistrate, but had been vindicated by God in His resurrection from the dead, of which the Apostles were the witnesses, and been recognized, on the basis of His own language about Himself, as the Son of God, the real and only manifestation of the one God in human nature, coming in order to enlighten the world and save it from sin and redeem it from all evil.

All this message was definitely concrete and historical. It knew exactly what it appealed to and on what grounds it based its confident and exclusive claims. We can easily familiarize ourselves with its tone in the New Testament. It is unmistakable. Then we contrast with this the vague and shifting and formless character of the 'theology' and tradition of the mysteries.[1] The god of one mystery fades into the god of another. They betray their origin as vague symbols of nature. They have no character or history. Thus in the best and most intelligible account of initiation into any of the mysteries which classical literature presents to us—the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius—Isis, whose rites are being celebrated, declares herself identical with the Phrygian Mother Goddess, with the Athenian Minerva, with the Venus of Paphos, with Diana, with Proserpine, with Ceres, with Juno, with Bellona, with Hecate.[2] So again the originally distinct divine mothers of Asiatic worship merge into one another. So the legends of Demeter and Persephone become inextricably mixed up with the legend of Dionysus in the Mysteries of Eleusis. So in Egypt Amon of Thebes was identified with Ra of Heliopolis and again with Min, who was later identified with the Greek Pan. Plutarch makes a great point of this identity of the divine under the veil of different names. Everything is vague and shifting and nebulous and unhistorical.

Again, the Christians derived from the ancient prophets a profound belief that God has a purpose in all history. This gives an importance in their eyes to history and to facts which is quite alien to the mythology of the Hellenistic world.[3] *There* was to be found no hope for the redemption of the world—no idea of a world-wide purpose with which men were called to co-operate—but only a method of escape for the individual from corruption and misery. It is the sense of what God has actually done for men in historical fact, coupled with the sense of what He is pledged to do—the gospel of the Kingdom, which accounts for the sense of joyful strength in the early Christian Church and their assurance of coming victory over the religions of the idols, which are "vanity" or "nothing at all" or "demons" impotent against God. Certainly, then, the theological and historical content of Christianity suggests no debt at all to the mystery religions.

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[1] Aristotle is quoted by Synesius as saying that those who partook of the mysteries did not learn anything but were the subjects of an impression—*οὐ μαθεῖν τι δεῖν ἀλλὰ παθεῖν καὶ διατεθῆναι*, Synesius, *Dion.*, 10.

[2] Apuleius, *Metamorph.*, bk. xi, cap. 5; cf. Plut., *op cit.*, cap. 61.

[3] On this prophetic doctrine see above, pp. 307 ff. and p. 132, n. 1.

Again, the Christianity of the New Testament inherits the sternly ethical tradition of the prophets. To these prophets we owe what to us seems inevitable and obvious, but was quite strange to the nature-worships of antiquity or the myths they generated—the intimate association of religion with morality. This intimate association is deepened in the teaching of our Lord and His apostles. It is the commonplace of St. Paul. "This ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light . . . ; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but even reprove them; for the things done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of."[1] St. Paul is conscious of the danger, incurred by the Christian communities, that the influx of Gentiles might weaken their moral sense. St. Jude's Epistle and the letters to the Seven Churches in the Apocalypse reveal a sense of fearful peril. But there could be no doubt what Christianity stood for, and it did in fact weather the storm and carried into the empire its great tradition of moral purity and of the spirit of unselfish fellowship. Much more than on its theological doctrine, it relied on its moral witness to convince "those without."

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[1] Eph. v. 5–12.

But in all this the basis and the tradition of the first Christian Church was in marked contrast to that of the mysteries. *Their* origin lay in what is barbarous and obscene; that is their character in classical literature. It is true that nothing could suppress them. They became the popular religions of the empire. They appealed to a craving for deliverance from fate and the contaminations of physical life, and for immortality, and for fellowship with the divine. They learned to use lofty language, and produced, no doubt, a profound impression even on educated people. But their appeal was emotional rather than moral. One of our few really luminous witnesses to the meaning of initiation into one of the mysteries is Apuleius (an author of the second century), who records at great length the initiation of his hero, Lucius—who represents himself—into the mysteries of Isis.[1] He describes magnificent and imposing processions, and a solemn period of preparation in the temple precincts, and sacrifices and mystical objects exhibited by the priests, and a ceremonial purification and a long abstinence, and white robes; and then, going as far as he dares in describing what may not be revealed, he says of the actual service of initiation, "I drew near to the confines of death, I trod the threshold of Proserpine, I was borne through all the elements and returned to earth again. I saw the sun gleaming with bright splendour at dead of night, I approached the gods above, and the gods below, and worshipped them face to face. Behold I have told thee things of which, though thou hast heard them, thou must yet know naught."

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[1] *The Metamorphoses, or "Golden Ass,"* bk. xi, Engl. trans., 1910, vol. ii, pp. 138 ff. (Clarendon Press).

All this is very solemn. It may be intended to hint at some dramatic ceremonies or at a process of hypnotism. It is declared to result in a life of dedication to the goddess. Then two other initiations follow—the description including sly intimations of the important place held in these processes by the demands of the priests for fees and banquets. Lucius (or Apuleius) was clearly a person of a high emotional sensibility; but the book, which concludes with these experiences and narrates the previous adventures of the hero, is full of lewdness, and the character of himself which Apuleius gives us in his *Apologia* does not suggest moral seriousness at all. The mysteries, we should gather, cultivated and in part satisfied the religious emotions of very many people. But there is no evidence that they were likely to effect a permanent moral reformation.[1] Christianity in its later history adopted an impressive ceremonial, and sometimes relied dangerously on appeals to the dramatic emotions, but it was not so at all in the early centuries,[2] and certainly in its methods of appeal it had in its early days learned nothing from the mysteries, which it viewed with horror on account of their immoralities.[3]

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[1] See Gardner, *Religious Experiences of St. Paul*, p. 87: "We have no reason to think that those who claimed salvation from Isis or Mithras were much better than their neighbours."

[2] Tertullian, *de Baptismo*, 2, as we have seen, contrasts the bareness and puritanism of the Christian rites with the splendour of the ritual in the mysteries.

[3] I have said nothing about Mithraism, to which M. Loisy alludes in the passage quoted above, partly because it is so astonishingly unlike Christianity in its theology and in the picture which it offers of the adventures of its hero, partly because its influence, which was very great and widespread from the second century onwards, does not appear to have been felt at the formative period of Christianity in the regions where it took shape. See Cumont, *op. cit.*, pp. xix, xx, and 140, 148. No doubt at the middle or end of the second century Justin and Tertullian see in the mysteries of Mithras a satanic imitation of the Christian sacraments (Justin, 1 *Apol.*, 66; Tertull., *de Praescript.*, 40). We should prefer to say that there is a sacramental instinct in all religions which may

III

Neither then in respect of its theology, nor of its morals, nor of its ritual, did the Christian Church owe anything to the mysteries at its origin. But a more plausible case can be made out for its sacramentalism. It must be admitted that the Christian Church, as it appears in St. Paul, shared with the mysteries in some sense the habit and principle of attributing a sacramental value to symbolic ritual acts. It must be admitted also that sacramentalism was not a characteristic of the Jews. The Jews regarded their sacred rites as divine commands, elements in a covenant of God of which they were the subjects. They were circumcised because it had been so commanded, that they might remain within the covenant, into which as Jews they were born.[1] They offered sacrifices because they were the divinely appointed means for maintaining or renewing their good relations with Jehovah. But they did not regard them as instruments of spiritual grace. Even in Philo, in whom the mystical sense is strongly developed, it shows itself only in interpreting historical events and scriptural phrases in a spiritual sense. But in St. Paul's language about baptism and the eucharist, and in the Gospel accounts of the institution of the eucharist, we already see the sacramental sense proper in unmistakable exercise.[2] Did it, we ask,

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express itself in ceremonies of purification and sacred meals. But to acknowledge similarity is not at all the same thing as saying that both have a common origin.

[1] Such phrases as "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your hearts" (Deut. x. 16, xxx. 6) are not properly sacramental; i.e. they do not attribute to circumcision of itself any spiritual effect. The only suggestion of sacramental effect ascribed to a religious rite that I can think of is that "the spirit of wisdom" in Joshua is attributed in Deut. xxxiv. 9 to the laying on of Moses' hands. But not so in Num. xxvii. 18. See quotation from Bousset in *Can We then Believe*, pp. 116–17.

[2] In the next chapter we shall examine St. Paul's sacramental position with care.

enter the Church from the Hellenistic atmosphere around them? I think the answer must be in the negative, on historical grounds.

As we have seen, a new and powerful outpouring of the Spirit of God was associated in Jewish prophecy with the coming of the Messiah. John the Baptist had contrasted his baptism with that of "him who was to come" in the sense that "he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit." And when, by what seems to have been the direction of Christ, baptism with water was taken over from the Jews by the Christian Church, we find attached to it, in association with the laying on of hands—also a rite familiar to the Jews—a sacramental value as a spiritual cleansing (not merely an admission to membership in the New Israel), and as the instrument for the reception of the Spirit.[1] This, St. Luke tells us, antedated the conversion of St. Paul, and also any influence of Gentile mysteries that can reasonably be imagined. It directly attaches itself to John the Baptist's words and the Old Testament prophecy of the fruit of the Messiah's coming. The rite of washing and the laying on of hands had thus become more than symbolical. It had become spiritually effective or properly sacramental.[2]

Once more we have seen that the precise account of the institution of the eucharist which St. Paul gives us must be accepted as part of what he "received" at his conversion only a few years after the crucifixion of Jesus, like the formulated account of the appearances after the Resurrection. It must be accepted as a historical account of what actually happened, which is repeated in almost the same terms by St. Mark. And we must interpret it in the light of the sacrificial system of the Jews.[1] The New Covenant, like the Old, is being inaugurated in sacrifice—the self-sacrifice of Christ—and the disciples of Jesus, the members of the New Israel, are to feed upon the sacrifice. The bread and the cup are to be the instruments of a real spiritual nourishment. The manhood in which Christ offered Himself—His body and blood—are to be imparted to them under those material forms. They are sacramental.

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[1] Acts ii. 38, viii. 18, xix. 5, 6. See below, chap. iv, p. 728.

[2] This belief was no doubt confirmed among the disciples by outward signs. The newly incorporated members spoke with tongues and prophesied.

All this sacramentalism of the New Covenant has its roots, then, in properly Jewish soil, and derives its materials thence; and the sacramental belief is already there before contact with Hellenism can reasonably be imagined to have taken place. Moreover, we must not exaggerate the resemblance of these rites and beliefs among the Christians to anything which was to be found in the Gentile religions and mysteries. The Syrian religions and mysteries in particular appear to have been notoriously corrupt,[2] and most unlikely to furnish models for the Christians. It is true that washing has been all the world over a religious or symbolic rite; and also religious or sacrificial meals have been common. But they were also Jewish institutions of immemorial antiquity with specially Jewish associations. The heathen mysteries dealt in imposing ceremonial and hypnotic influences and frenzied excitement. Their barbaric origin was still prominent. There was nothing of this sort among the Christians. As to the 'sacramental' banquets among the Gentiles and the ideas attached to them, we know practically nothing. And we must not argue from the altogether unknown, when the known supplies us with all we need to account for the origin of the very simple and deeply ethical Christian sacraments.[1]

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[1] The phrase "the table of the Lord" used by St. Paul in connexion with the eucharist (1 Cor. x. 21) has, as St. Paul implies, analogies among the heathen in what he calls "the table of devils." Both alike are sacrificial feasts. There is a celebrated papyrus from Oxyrhynchus in which a certain Cheremon invites his friend to be a guest "at the table of the Lord Serapis in the Serapaeum to-morrow." But it is also the case that "the table of the Lord" was an old Jewish phrase for the altar of sacrifice (Mal. i. 7–12; Ezek. xli. 22, xliv. 15, 16). We should take note that the idea of the papyrus is that of having the god for host at a banquet. That is not the idea suggested in the New Testament for the eucharist; there the function of Jesus Christ is not that of host, but rather (in whatever sense) that of victim and food.

[2] See Apuleius, bk. viii, cap. 24 to ix, cap. 10, for the reputation of the "Dea Syra" and her priests and holy emblems (ix, 4). These chapters are interesting because, revolting as the priests and their rites are, they attract the reverence of the "chief citizen" of a Thessalian city "who had a religious disposition" (viii, 30).

Finally, we must consider the suggestion made by Reitzenstein and others [2] that in particular the whole complex of ideas associated with "the religion of the Spirit" in St. Paul's and St. John's writings is part of a common stock of ideas which was pervading the Hellenistic world more or less abundantly, having their origin in great part from Egypt; and that in their Christian form they can be best explained by Hellenistic influence. By "the complex of ideas" about the religion of the Spirit is meant such as the following: that a man may become possessed by divine spirit and thus become a "new man" or be "born again," and pass from the defiling and transitory life of this world into life eternal and divine; that he will experience conflict between the spirit and the flesh or between spirit and soul (natural life); that the spirit will triumph and that he has even now concealed within him a spiritual body, immortal and indissoluble, waiting for liberation from the incumbrance of the present gross material body; and, finally, the idea of the inspiration of particular individuals by a divine spirit, so that they are taken out of themselves and speak supernatural truths.

This proposal of Reitzenstein's to find a new source for Christian ideas is very elusive—partly because there are confessedly many ideas concerning spirits and spiritual influences which are common to men of many traditions and races; partly also because the dates of many of the documents which are relied upon by Reitzenstein and those who think with him are profoundly uncertain. Thus in some cases where some connexion between the non-Christian and the Christian documents appears to be unmistakable, it may be, not that the non-Christian document has influenced the Christian, but the other way. This uncertainty especially affects the Hermetic documents, which have generally, and it would seem rightly, been reckoned to exhibit the same sort of influences from Hebrew religion as the Gnostic theories and documents undoubtedly do.[1] Under these circumstances of uncertainty the most satisfactory method of argument is to start from the clearly known—that is, the influence of the Old Testament upon the first Christians, and their own experience in the school of Jesus the Christ, and to ask how far this accounts for all the ideas about the religion of the Spirit which we find in the New Testament; and also to note not only the resemblances but the differences which undoubtedly exist between the New Testament ideas and those to be found in Hellenism, and consider whether they reach the point of making any fundamental influence of the latter on the former improbable.

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[1] See further pp. 744 ff.

[2] See *Belief in Christ*, p. 429; also *Can We then Believe*, n. 14, pp. 217 ff.

1. Let us then have it clearly present to our imagination that the idea of 'spirits' and consequently of 'spirit' is approximately universal among men. It seems to be derived from the sense of breath in men and animals. There is something clearly tenuous and invisible but yet real in men's bodies

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[1] See Dr. H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, pp. 144 f., 167, etc. (Hodder & Stoughton). Critics, like the late Dr. Edwin Hatch, have often rebuked orthodox writers, and justly, for quoting documents without due regard to their precise date. I think, however, it is time for the orthodox to retaliate.

which at least in death departs from them. This is soul or spirit. Also the world of nature with all its mysterious movement and life appears to be the habitation of spirits. Such beliefs are approximately universal among men. And the conception of 'spirits' is generally that of tenuous and aerial, rather than completely immaterial, substances. Besides this belief in spirits in general, there is commonly also a belief in some more powerful spirits or gods. And inasmuch as men all the world over have passed their lives in an awful dread of these spirits greater and lesser, the acceptable religions have been those which appeared to possess control over them, or which taught men how to keep on the favourable side of them. There is also almost universal in the world the conception of the inspired man—that is, the man possessed by a divine spirit, rapt out of his own self-consciousness into trance or frenzy, and becoming thus "a new man,"[1] and perhaps the organ of a god to declare his will or to give guidance in answer to questions. All this belongs to natural religion and to the lower ranges of natural religions.

2. This traditional background is often unmistakably felt in the Old Testament, but it is kept at a distance and in restraint by the distinctive beliefs, due to the prophets, which gradually came to absorb the whole tradition of the Jews and to control all their literature—especially the belief in one God, the Creator, to whom all spirits must be absolutely subordinated, as His creatures. In St. John's Gospel our Lord is represented as saying "God is spirit"; and the expression carries with it no speculation on the divine essence. In its context it seems to mean that God is absolutely raised above all the limitations of place, and knows things as they are, and values them by moral, not material values. It was in fact

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[1] See 1 Sam. x. 6, where Samuel says to Saul, "Thou shalt be turned into another man."

along the lines of the unity, the moral perfection, the omnipotence, and the omnipresence of God, and the absolute distinction of the Creator from His creatures, and not by any philosophical speculation, that the Jews reached the idea of God as "pure spirit."

But they attached to the spirituality of God—at least in the literature of the Bible—no idea of aloofness. God is intensely active in the world. And this universal activity in creating and sustaining is called His spirit. As we have seen, however, the idea of the spirit of God came to be almost reserved for the action of God in the redemption of Israel, and through Israel the whole world, including the sanctification and transformation of individual souls. And it was in this reserved sense that it passes into the New Testament. There the gift of the Holy Spirit is found pre-eminently in Christ and then passes as His gift from Him upon His Church. So concentrated is the thought of the New Testament writers upon "the Holy Spirit," the Spirit of the Father and of Jesus, as something of which they have personal experience, that, though they continue to talk of evil spirits, they speak no longer of good spirits, but only of the one Spirit of the one God and the one Lord, and of the human spirits, which He comes to enrich.[1] There is nothing in any religious tradition with which the first Christians could have come into contact at all resembling this overwhelming belief in the one God and the one Lord and the one Spirit, and no one would suggest that this belief could come from any source but one.

The philosophic world did indeed believe in some sense in one God (though not in such a sense as to exclude the many gods of popular belief), and they spoke much of the divine as immanent and operative in the world, under terms such as 'logos' (reason or law or force) or 'nous' (mind). But they did not commonly use the term 'spirit.' Even in Plotinus, when philosophy had come to be so deeply occupied in what we call 'the spiritual life,' the term (πνεῦμα) 'spirit' is of rare occurrence and without importance in his system.[1] In English books this is not always made apparent, because there is a habit, which Dr. Inge warmly commends, of translating *nous* (mind) by 'spirit.' But the fundamental ideas are essentially different. *Nous* is fundamentally intellectual and static, and *pneuma* is dynamic. *Nous* is concerned with thinking, and *pneuma* primarily with acting. They must not be confused. Thus upon Philo, Jew though he is, the Alexandrian influence is so strong that the idea of "the Spirit" is almost absent except with regard to prophets rapt into trance. The only field of Greek speculation previous to Christianity[2] where 'spirit' was much heard of was Stoicism, where the all-pervasive God, conceived of as elemental fire, was spoken of as the *sacer spiritus*; but the writers of the New Testament had nothing in common with this Heraclitean speculation; and though some allusions in Stoic writers to the converse of men with "the holy spirit" have a Christian sound, the underlying ideas are very different.[3] When Dr. Inge[4] speaks of "the adoption of the Stoical πνεῦμα by the Christians," he seems to me to be speaking without any regard to history. With the Christians the belief in the Spirit of God has entirely a Jewish origin and an origin more ancient than Zeno.

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[1] We hear in the New Testament of angelic beings of many grades, but they are never called "spirits," unless in the quotation from the Psalms in Heb. i. 7, where R.V. translates "winds." In 1 John iv. 1–3 "spirit" seems to be used impersonally, almost as we talk of the 'spirit' of such and such a movement: see my *Epistles of St. John*, pp. 168–9.

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[1] Inge's *Plotinus*, ii, 38.

[2] In some later, e.g. Mithraic, documents there is language resembling the Christian about the divine spirit, but it may well be due to an infiltration of Christian ideas.

[3] See Dr. Edwyn Bevan's *Stoics and Sceptics*, pp. 42–3. For the use of 'spirit' in the Hermetic books see App. Note B, p. 727.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 247.

It is further to be noticed that the doctrine of spirit among the Stoics is pantheistic, and with them to be identified with the spirit is to be "deified." Christians in the early centuries and later occasionally used this sort of language. But it is alien to the New Testament.[1] True, the consciousness of possession by the divine spirit carries with it the sense of fellowship in the eternal or divine life even now, with the hope of fuller fellowship hereafter; but the idea of Christians being 'made gods' or 'becoming god' would be abhorrent to it.

3. No doubt with the Jews, as with the Greeks, the idea of spirit had been very closely associated with the 'inspiration' of holy men; and no doubt, as has been already explained,[2] the idea of inspiration which lies at the basis of the Old Testament was the common idea which prevailed throughout the world, which finds the evidence of 'possession' in frenzied excitement or trance or ecstasy. The special prophets to whose inspiration we owe the religion of Israel never wholly lost this association of inspiration with trance or ecstasy. It is seen especially in Ezekiel. It is seen in St. Paul. But it comes to occupy a very small place. The message which the prophets receive both in the Old Testament and in the New is addressed by the Divine Spirit to their own alert consciousness and will.[3] Thus when Philo, under the alien influences of Alexandrian Hellenism, identifies inspiration with trance and ecstasy, and declares that the reason and intelligence of the prophet must be utterly extinguished while he is under the divine influence—

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[1] The nearest approach to it is in 2 Pet. i. 4, "partakers of the divine nature."

[2] *Belief in God*, chap. iv, p. 74.

[3] See *Belief in God*, p. 87.

"The mind in us is expelled at the arrival of the divine spirit and returns to its home at its removal"[1] —he is departing definitely from the higher ground of Jewish prophecy on which Christian prophecy continued to stand. "The spirits of the prophets," says St. Paul, "are subject to the prophets."[2] No doubt the psychical perturbation common in the Gentile world, which was attributed to possession by spirits, was seen among the Christians especially in the phenomenon of "the tongues." Such psychical phenomena, unaccompanied with intelligence, have occurred in connexion with all sorts of religious movements. St. Paul does not deny their divine origin,[3] but he ranks them low among spiritual gifts; and, even so, if "the tongues" among the Christians are compared with the phenomena of 'possession' among the Gentiles, they appear restrained and sane indeed.[4] Thus there is indeed some connexion between the phenomena of inspiration or possession in the Jewish-Christian world and in the world of Gentile religions. But the characteristic development of the gift, and conception of the gift, in the former is markedly different, and the result on the whole markedly distinct. The Christian Church of the second century was quite right when it repudiated the Montanist conception of prophecy (in which the prophet was deprived of his senses) as pagan and not Christian.

4. The more we study the Hellenistic lore of 'the spiritual life,' the more, I think, we feel that it is not

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[1] Sanday, *Inspiration*, p. 74; Swete in Hastings, *D. of B.*, ii, 405.

[2] 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

[3] I should speak more strictly if I were to say "divine or diabolic."

[4] Cf. the account in Apuleius, *Metamorph.* viii, 27, of the gesticulations and self-macerations of the priests of the "All-Mother": "One of them raved more wildly than the rest . . . as though he were filled with the breath of some divinity."

fundamentally ethical. "The holy faith" and "the glorious faith" of which Apuleius speaks in connexion with different mysteries,[1] the ceremonial "purity" demanded, the temporary asceticism required, the "salvation" which is the goal, do not really have the same meaning as the same words would have in a Christian document. To be holy means to be dedicated to a divine being, who may, like the goddesses worshipped at Ephesus and Corinth, be quite indifferent to morality; the salvation is deliverance from the pollution and transitoriness of physical life; the purity is ceremonial rather than moral; the asceticism is based on the conception of certain things as essentially evil—that is, on an essential dualism.[2] On the other hand, there runs through the whole Bible the healthy sense that the beginning and end of true religion is moral, and is to be seen in our dealings in common life; that all created things are in themselves good; that the blame for sin cannot be laid on the body or on fate, but must be borne by the will; that when the will is once set right all the whole nature will follow; and that sacraments are not charms nor substitutes for change of character. Certainly our Lord or St. Paul was very unlike a Hellenistic hierophant, with his secret tradition and his magical charms.

St. Paul has been accused of regarding the body and the flesh as essentially evil. He does use language which looks like it. But he is speaking of the body as it is enslaved to sin. That is what he means by "the body of sin"; and by "the works of the flesh" he describes the kind of life which men live when their lower nature is allowed to dominate their higher. On the whole, he leaves no room for mistake. It is our whole nature, bodily and mental, which, under the control of the converted will and by the power of the indwelling Spirit, is to be first sanctified and then glorified; and the goal of redemption is for the whole of our nature and not only for souls.[1]

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[1] Apuleius, *Metamorph.*, viii, 28, xi, 11.

[2] This is very obvious in Plutarch, *de Isid. et Osir.*

5. Finally, we must not be misled into supposing that the use of certain terms by St. Paul means that he used them in the same sense as the votaries of the mysteries. They talked of course about mysteries, meaning rites handed down in a secret tradition and not to be revealed to the profane. But before St. Paul's time the word had passed into meaning generally "a secret," and is so used in the Greek Bible. St. Paul uses it to mean a "secret," and once apparently as meaning a "symbol"[2]; but his most characteristic use of it is to mean a secret purpose of God now revealed, which it was the business of the messengers of the Gospel to proclaim to all the world. This is very far off its meaning in the Greek mysteries. No doubt the mysteries had created a vocabulary which no one who used popular Greek could quite avoid. "Perfect" with them meant "fully initiated," and in St. Paul's use of it there is a trace of such a meaning, but he much more often means by it complete or "full grown."[3] He once says "I have been initiated" (*μεμύημαι*, Phil. iv. 12), but it is only into the secrets of how to use both poverty and wealth; his use of "wisdom" and "knowledge" is what the Old Testament would suggest. One word which Christianity really had in common with the

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[1] See 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; Rom. xii. 1, viii. 11, 21; Phil. iii. 21. It is not apparently certain whether any belief in a "spiritual body," other than a ghost, was current in Hellenistic circles before St. Paul's day. But it is, I think, certain that St. Paul's idea of the spiritual body is based on what he believed about the risen and glorified body of Christ. See Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

[2] Eph. v. 32. For St. Paul's use of "mystery," see especially Dr. Armitage Robinson's *Ephesians*, pp. 234 ff.

[3] See especially 1 Cor. ii. 6, where *τέλειοι* = *πνευματικοί* (iii. 1) and is put in contrast to *νήπιοι*; cf. xiv. 20.

mysteries—"rebirth"—occurs only once in the Pauline letters.[1]

On the whole, I dare to think that the answer to the problem with which this chapter began is fairly plain. Christianity, the religion of the Spirit, is in its whole original substance derived from the Jewish root and from Christ. From these sources comes the idea of the one Spirit, and the conception of the Church of God as His home, and the beliefs about the sacraments of initiation and communion, and the conception of life in the Spirit, and of the destiny of the body. The Christian idea of inspiration is essentially Jewish and not Hellenistic; and the absence of secrecy in the early days about the doctrines and rites of the Church, and above all its sturdy moralism, betoken an origin different from the mysteries.

The mysteries, then, played no part in the origin of Christianity. But they surrounded the Church when it went out into the Gentile world and were an important element in the atmosphere in which it lived. They do not appear to influence the New Testament in any important particular. But when we find the later Church calling baptism and the eucharist "mysteries," and mysteries not to be disclosed to the profane, we do feel their influence; and it was not always for good. Still, on the whole, they may be said to have created a temper of mind in the world which made the Christian message of redemption and salvation irrespective of class or race acceptable and familiar; and, by those who believe in a divine providence, the prevalence of the mysteries in the Roman Empire will certainly be regarded as part of the divine preparation for the spread of a universal Gospel. Indeed the ideas and needs associated with the mysteries appear to be so fundamental in humanity, that no religion could really have claimed to be the religion for mankind which was not able to appreciate and to satisfy them.

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[1] Tit. iii. 5. For the whole subject of "St. Paul's relation to the Mystery terminology" see Dr. Kennedy, *op. cit.*, chap. iv. Some uses of the idea of "rebirth," in connexion with Mithraism, and elsewhere, were very likely influenced by Christianity; but the idea itself—the idea of a man being possessed by some divine *afflatus* and becoming "another man"—is so natural that no borrowing of one religion from the other can be established on the ground of the common use of it.

APPENDED NOTE A (see p. 706)

THE PAGAN MYSTERIES AND THE EUCHARIST

M. Loisy in *Les Mystères païens et le Mystère chrétien* and Dr. Farnell in his *Cults of the Greek States* (vol. v, under the head of the Dionysus worship) would have us believe that in the worship of Zagreus or Dionysus (and in the Orphic mysteries) the worshippers believed themselves to *eat their god*; and on this ground M. Loisy assimilates the Eucharist to the mysteries. Sir James Frazer, as we have seen, does the like. It has indeed become a commonplace to do so. But the evidence quoted by Loisy and Farnell does not support this idea. I am allowed to quote the following passages from a letter of Mr. Edwyn Bevan, who writes on Hellenistic matters with an authority I could not claim:

"I have looked up what Loisy says about the sacramental eating of the slain god in the Zagreus cult. Apparently the Zagreus worshippers did eat, as a religious ceremony, a living bull, tearing it to pieces 'à belles dents' (p. 32), and Loisy says that the rationale of this was that the bull was regarded as an embodiment of the god and that the worshippers conceived divine virtue to be communicated to them by the sacrament. He says (pp. 34, 35):

"'Sauf que la participation s'établit dans le sacrifice chrétien moyennant le pain et le vin, non par une victime animale, l'économie du mystère eucharistique est conçue de la même façon que celle du mystère dionysique.'

"But in the passages which Loisy cites in the footnotes I cannot find any statement to the effect that the bull was regarded as identical with the god or that the worshippers derived divine virtue from eating. One passage is from Firmicus Maternus; it says that the Cretans devoured the bull in *memory* of Zagreus' being devoured by the Titans 'crudeles epulas annuis commemorationibus excitantes'—nothing about divine virtue being derived from eating. The second passage is from Arnobius; it says that the Bacchae devoured goats, not in order to *get* divine virtue, but in order to show (i.e. by doing something superhuman) that they *were full* 'dei numine ac maiestate.' Loisy's interpretation seems therefore a merely conjectural reconstruction of the theory underlying the rite. It looks as if (supposing it is true that the idea had originally been that the god himself was eaten) the rite was not understood in this sense at the time to which the statements of Firmicus and Arnobius refer.

"Loisy also tries to prove the same thing with regard to the Orphic mysteries. His data seems to be: (1) That it 'paraît certain' (a suspicious phrase always) (p. 46) that the Orphics practised *ὠμοφαγία*. The evidence he adduces is a fragment of Euripides (footnote, p. 44). (2) The Orphic formula *ἔριφος ἐς γάλα ἔπετον* (the meaning of which, I believe, is very doubtful). Putting these two together, he concludes (p. 47) that 'l'initié régénéré, était sauvé en s'assimilant le chevreau mystique, en mangeant la chair de la victime qui représentait, qui était toujours d'une certaine manière, pour la foi, Dionysus Zagreus, en devenant ainsi lui-même "chevreau," en s'identifiant à Bacchus.' But if Loisy has no data for this beyond those he quotes, they would seem a very inadequate foundation for his beautiful description of the Orphic sacramental belief, which seems to be taken out of his own head."

I entirely concur in Mr. Bevan's judgment. And of the passages cited by Dr. Farnell in his notes on the Dionysus worship none support the supposition that the frenzied worshippers believed themselves to be eating their god. He cites a passage from Clement of Alexandria which says something quite different: *ὠμὰ γὰρ ἤσθιον κρέα οἱ μυόμενοι Διονύσῳ δεῖγμα τοῖς τελουμένοις τοῦ σπαραγμοῦ ὃν ὑπέστη Διόνυσος πρὸς τῶν Μαινάδων.* That is to say, they ate raw flesh as a memorial of the mythical incident. I have already quoted Cicero's saying which shows that he at least thought the idea of "theophagy" too absurd to be even suggested.

I have only been able to find one reference at all contemporary with, or within the area of, nascent Christianity to eating a god, and that is Plutarch's description (*de Isid. et Osir.*, cap. 72) of how neighbouring cities in Egypt would provoke one another to war by contemptuously eating the god of their neighbours. Thus the inhabitants of Cynopolis ate the fish which was the god of Oxyrhynchos, and the Oxyrhynchites retaliated by sacrificing and eating a dog. And the Lycopolites ate a sheep, saying that was the way of *their* god. This does not look as if to eat your god was a form of devotion, even where edible animals were gods.

The conclusion to which I would ask adhesion is that, though it is possible the bull who was torn to pieces in the mysteries of Dionysus may in a remote past have been identified with the god, yet the evidence shows that this was so no longer.

NOTE B (see p. 719)

ON THE USE OF 'SPIRIT' IN THE HERMETIC BOOKS

These books, which appear to be of Egyptian origin, are a sort of manual of the spiritual life, as it was understood in the third century in some non-Christian—mainly neo-Platonist—circles. There does not appear to be any good reason for assigning to those 'chapters' which we possess an earlier date: see *Belief in Christ*, p. 430. In them 'spirit' is mostly conceived of as an element in nature—the principle of physical life. It is coupled with fire or air or light: " The spirit is in the body and penetrates the veins and arteries and blood and moves the living being " (see cap. i. 9, 16 [reading πυρός for πατρός], 17, ii. 6, 8, iii. 1, iv. 1, ix. 9, x. 13). But in cap. xiii the creator god is called 'spirit bearing' and a higher position seems to be assigned to spirit. Certainly there is nothing in these books suggesting any connexion with the N.T. doctrine of the Holy Spirit: for fuller information see *Can We then Believe*, n. 14, pp. 217 ff.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

In the two previous chapters we have freed ourselves from certain doubts which some influential modern writers have been instilling into us. Not only particular passages and texts of the New Testament, but the whole historical setting in which Jesus is presented to us, as the Christ who was to fulfil the vocation of Israel, has reassured us in believing—not that He founded a Church, but that He refounded the Church, the true Israel henceforth consisting of those who believed that Jesus was the Christ, or the Christ was Jesus ; and that in the persons of the twelve apostles He re-equipped it with a body of officers in the place of those who had lost their position by their absolute rejection of " the counsel of God " ; and that He sanctioned and instituted in baptism and the eucharist certain rites of spiritual fellowship for the observance of the Church, which were to be safeguards of its unity. The extreme apocalyptic view which would regard all this as impossible, because Christ anticipated no future for the world, we have set aside as arbitrary, resting its case as it does on a one-sided emphasis on part of the evidence and rejection of the rest. Moreover, the purely " apocalyptic " conception of Christ cannot account for the earliest Church, as we see it in St. Paul's Epistles and in the Acts, organizing itself from the first to deal with a developing situation. It is quite true that our Lord gave few specific directions to His Church, and left it in the main to organize itself, under the guidance of His Spirit. Nevertheless, when He left the world, He left behind Him a certain rudimentary organization already in being.

We have looked steadily at the mystery religions, as providing in great part the Gentile atmosphere in which the Church spread. It is a study of absorbing interest; and we have recognized there a world of religious societies, bound together by secret rites into the fellowship of gods whose patronage was relied upon to save their votaries from the present world of change and dissolution, and translate them into a world beyond, free from death and corruption. We have recognized how much the prevalence of these mystery religions, as in some sort religions of redemption, facilitated the spread of the religion of the Church, and also the danger the Church ran of assimilation to these truly superstitious associations. But we have seen the best of reasons for rejecting the modern suggestion that either the fundamental doctrines or characteristic ideas or rites of the primitive Church were derived from these pagan mysteries. On the one hand, the doctrines and ideas and rites of the Christians of the New Testament are accounted for by the tradition and Scriptures which they inherited from old Israel, interpreted in the light of the new and overwhelming experiences through which they had passed in the fellowship of Jesus and in the receiving of His Spirit—experiences which antedated any immediate contact with the world of Hellenism. And on the other hand, the attitude of St. Paul in his epistles and St. Luke in his history towards the Gentile "idolatries" makes the notion of their imitating the practices or assimilating the ideas of the heathen in a high degree improbable. Moreover, we have been led to feel that those who would assimilate the Church to the mysteries are apt greatly to exaggerate the resemblances in idea and rite and language and to ignore the differences.

So we are left believing the New Testament record that Jesus Christ did intend to perpetuate His work in the world for a period which He refused to define, and did refound and refashion Israel to be His organ for this purpose, and did really inspire into it His own and the Father's Spirit ; and our next task must be to examine more closely the religion of the Spirit and the Church, as we see it in our earliest records.

I

All that Christ did in the world, He did in and by the Spirit which possessed Him wholly, and when from His throne in heaven He poured out His Spirit, which is also the Spirit of the Father, upon His Church, it was in order that all the rich endowment of humanity which had been found in Him might be transmitted to the Church which is "His body." Thus, if in one sense the ascension of Christ represents an end and a climax, as it is the fulfilment of humanity on the throne of God, in another sense it is but the beginning. For that humanity of Jesus is the fountain-head of a new race in which all the attributes of that New Man are to be perpetuated and manifested, as it gathers within its compass men of all nations and tribes and kinds. Thus the Holy Spirit comes not so much to supply the absence of Christ as to accomplish His presence in the world as its Saviour and New Life.

This is the developed doctrine which we find in St. Paul's Epistles, and with substantially the same implications in St. John.[1] But doubtless, like St. Paul's doctrine about Christ's person, it was not realized at once.

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[1] All the whole matter of the New Testament referring to the Holy Spirit is carefully and fully analysed by Dr. Swete in *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament.*

The Synoptic Gospels tell us a good deal about the Holy Spirit in Christ,[1] and they all of them reproduce the assurance of John the Baptist that it was to be the function of 'Him who was to come' to baptize men with the Spirit. But, as has been remarked, they say singularly little about any preparation given by Christ to His disciples for the reception of the great gift. St. Luke, however, in the beginning of the Acts represents our Lord as referring to teaching about the Holy Spirit which He had given them. "Wait," said He, "for the promise of the Father, which ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."[2] This interprets the saying recorded at the end of Luke's Gospel, "Behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, till ye be clothed with power from on high."[3] This "promise of my Father"—this gift of "power from on high"—is the Holy Spirit. We cannot but think of the words ascribed to our Lord in the Fourth Gospel, "The Paraclete, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name."[4]

It is, I think, very difficult to imagine that our Lord did not give His disciples some such preparatory teaching about the gift of the Holy Spirit as is conveyed in His last discourses before His passion according to St. John. And the teaching of these discourses is at once so original, so profound, and so singularly well adapted to the situation of the moment, that we are led to believe that it is not an imaginative construction by the evangelist, but a real memory. The Holy Spirit really brought to his remembrance all that Jesus said to them.[5] Still, it would not appear that the full meaning of the Spirit's presence, any more than the full meaning of the person of their Master,[1] was realized by the first disciples or by the Apostles immediately after Pentecost. I do not indeed think that it is true to say that in the Acts the gift of the Spirit is associated in any exclusive sense with the extraordinary gifts of 'tongues' and prophesying, or with the miraculous in general.[2] It is true that St. Luke lays stress on the wonderful signs which marked the sudden arrival of the Spirit on, or just before, the day of Pentecost,[3] and on the similar signs which marked the first bestowal of the gift upon the Gentiles, Cornelius and his companions, and again on the twelve men who had been disciples of John the Baptist and were now led on into the faith of Christ.[4] And he delights to recount the miracles of healing wrought by the apostles. But also courage in speaking the word, and wisdom, and faith, and large-hearted goodness are associated with the Spirit's presence,[5] and He is recognized not only as the inspirer of the prophets of old, but also as the present and personal guide and helper of individuals, and of the assemblies of the Church, in all their ways.

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[1] See above, pp. 630 f.

[2] Acts i. 4, 5.

[3] Luke xxiv. 49

[4] John xiv. 26.

[5] John xiv. 26.

Nevertheless it is to St. Paul that we owe in the first instance, as the theology of the person of Christ, so also the theology of the Spirit. From him first we get that subtle and profound conception of the Holy Spirit as distinct—I can only say personally distinct—from the ascended Christ, while yet so intimately one with Him that His presence involves the presence of Christ, so that "in the Spirit" means also "in Christ."[1] We cannot speak with any confidence as to how precisely this conception was formed in St. Paul's mind. I suppose that the actual experience of the Church, before St. Paul came on the scene, had given the apostles and their companions an intense sense, as of the personal Christ now glorified in the heavens, so also of the personal Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, guiding them from within. I suppose also that from the first they must have realized that the Holy Spirit was something more than the substitute for a now absent Christ. We cannot regard it as doubtful that in "the breaking of bread" they had from the first repeated the words, "Take, eat, this is my body," "Drink ye all of this, this is my blood," and had known themselves to be sharers together in Christ. It may have been by an internal revelation that St. Paul's subtle theology of the Spirit in His relation to Christ came to form itself in his mind. But it is the same theology that we find in St. John's Gospel, especially but not only[2] in those last discourses spoken by Christ immediately before His passion. There, too, the Spirit is distinguished sharply from Christ Himself as "another Paraclete," but also so intimately involved with Him and with the Father that His coming is the coming back of Christ and the presence of the Father. And I continually find myself asking whether such words of Christ as "He will give you another Paraclete," "The Paraclete, even the Holy

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 372 ff.

[2] I think Harnack, for instance, is unfair when he says (*Luke the Physician*, p. 141 (Williams & Norgate): "We cannot repress the suspicion that with him (Luke) everything is concentrated in the magical efficacy of the Name of Christ. . . . Miraculous healing is the essential function, and forms the test, of the new religion." Dr. Anderson Scott remarks that this was a tendency which appears specially in the early stages of the Acts and diminishes as it proceeds. See his essay in *The Spirit* (ed. Streeter), p. 131. Later the emphasis comes to be rather on prophetic insight and guidance as the characteristic marks of the Spirit's presence.

[3] See Appended Note A, p. 768, on the Pentecostal gift as described in Acts.

[4] Acts ii. 4, x. 46, xix. 6.

[5] Acts iv. 31, vi. 3, 5, xi. 24

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 533–6 and 549 ff. I should wish to emphasize what is there said of the distinction of the Holy Spirit from the glorified Christ in St. Paul's conception.

[2] For we must not forget iii. 5–8, vi. 63, vii. 39, xx. 22.

Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name," "I will send you another Paraclete," "I will come unto you," "We will come unto you" (i.e. the Father and I), were not already in the memory of the Church even before St. Paul's activity began.[1]

And this intimate theology of the Spirit brought to the front in St. Paul's teaching the central moral purpose of His coming and presence in the Church and in all its members. As has been said, there is no doubt in the Acts a tendency, though not an exclusive tendency, to emphasize the action of the Holy Spirit in connexion with extraordinary or miraculous gifts. St. Paul recognizes these among the endowments of the Spirit, but depreciates them by comparison with those we should call moral and normal. All that we identify with the humanity of Jesus—enlightenment, sonship, moral liberty, self-control, love, the consecration and sanctification of body as well as spirit—all this it is the function of the Spirit to bring to be enwrought into the texture of our sin-defiled nature. All the "knowledge" which St. Paul so passionately prays for for his converts is relative to this practical end. It is not philosophical or speculative endowments that he desires. The work and purpose of the Spirit coincides absolutely with the work and purpose of Christ. St. Paul does not identify the Spirit with the ascended Christ,[2] but Christ comes to us only through the Spirit, and to be "in the Spirit" is to be "in Christ."

Superficially considered, such a conception of the Spirit's work would be compatible with regarding the gift of the Spirit as a gift to separate individuals. And it is for St. Paul a glorious truth that the Holy Spirit's presence does deepen and intensify the sense of individuality and the value and responsibility of the individual. But it is a sure sign of shallow thinking to put individuality in man into antithesis to his corporate and social life. Tyranny, it is true, depresses individuality, but corporate life intensifies it. Certainly the gift of the Spirit in St. Paul's teaching is a gift to the 'holy community'; and the life of the individual recipient of the Spirit is not otherwise conceived of than as that of a "member" which lives by its incorporation in "the body." If the bodies of individual Christians are "temples of the Holy Spirit," it is because they belong to the greater temple which is the Church.[1] We shall see that St. Paul has a vivid sense of the sacraments as means of grace to the individual, but an equally vivid sense that they are social ceremonies by which the individual is bound to the Church. So the principle is established that fellowship with God is not otherwise to be won or maintained than in the fellowship of men, and by faithful recognition of the obligations of membership. The Christian ethic, as St. Paul expounds it, is a predominantly social ethic; and the most characteristic expression of the meaning of life in the Spirit is with him to be found in the words 'love' or 'communion,' which means sharing together—the "communion of the Holy Ghost."[2]

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[1] On the meaning of "Paraclete" see *Can We then Believe*, n. 11, pp. 204 ff.

[2] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 549 ff.

We shall come back upon these thoughts shortly. But we must delay for a little in order to consider how far St. Paul's theology of the Spirit is also that of the other New Testament writers; and first of St. John.[3]

Modern critical writers on the New Testament are,

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[1] 1 Cor. vi. 19, iii. 16–17.

[2] It must not be forgotten that though St. Paul speaks of the gift of the Spirit to the Church and its members as already abundant, yet it is only a pledge or foretaste of a greater abundance in a world yet to come. 2 Cor. i. 22, v. 5; Eph. i. 13–14.

[3] Like other people I have recurrent difficulties about the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, but on the whole I am always forced back upon the belief that John the son of Zebedee must be, in the real sense, the author of it and of the Epistles which bear his name. And the historical value of the Fourth Gospel seems to me always increasingly certain.

I cannot but think, too much intent on discerning and emphasizing differences between the writers of the New Testament, and ignoring substantial identities,[1] while at the same time they emphasize superficial similarities of language between the Christian and the pagan writers, ignoring profounder differences. Thus it is true that, in the last discourses of our Lord to His disciples as reported by St. John, the Holy Spirit whom they are to expect is described as "the Spirit of truth," and the fruit of His coming is to be an accurate recollection and clear understanding of their Lord's words, and a vigorous witness to Him[2]; and that in the Epistles of St. John it is still this true and trustworthy knowledge which is emphasized as the result of the Holy Spirit's unction[3]; but it has to be remembered that the discourses of our Lord were addressed to the disciples at a moment when they were, and were confessing themselves to be, utterly bewildered in their mind as to the meaning of their experiences and of the words of the Master.[4] What they needed above all was the assurance that, when He was gone, they would understand His meaning and be able to deliver their message to the world. It has to be remembered also that the Spirit is elsewhere in this Gospel described by our Lord as the Spirit of regeneration or a new life, and as the life-giver, and as the living water of eternal life, and the power enabling the Twelve to continue the apostolate of Christ.[5] And in the discourse following the Last Supper, in spite of the special references to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth, something more general is implied in the term "the Paraclete" (or Agent), in whose coming Christ is to come back to them. This leads us to think that all that is implied in the figure of the vine—("Because I live, ye shall live also," "Abide in me, and I in you")—is to be realized by the coming of the Holy Spirit to abide in them. And as regards St. John's First Epistle, if it is only the witness of the Spirit to Jesus that is actually spoken of, and the secure perception of truth conveyed by His anointing —a reminder which the intellectual disturbances of the time made specially opportune — yet it is gratuitous to suppose that St. John was unconscious of the connexion of "eternal life" in all its aspects with the Holy Spirit. What a man says in a particular letter is not all he has in his mind, but what the circumstances of the moment require.

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[1] I find myself as I read some modern critical or hypercritical books murmuring the words of the son of Sirach, "There is an exquisite subtilty, and the same is not just."

[2] See xiv. 17, 26, xv. 26–7, xvi. 7 f.

[3] 1 John ii. 20, 27.

[4] John xiii. 36, xiv. 1, 5, 8, 22.

[5] iii. 5–8, vi. 63, vii. 38–9, xx. 22–3.

St. Peter in his First Epistle speaks of the Spirit of Christ specially as the Spirit of ancient prophecy and the inspirer of the Gospel message.[1] But he also calls Him generally "the Spirit of the Glory" (Christ) and the Spirit of sanctification,[2] and when he speaks of the diverse 'charismata' bestowed on members of the Church, he doubtless would have us recognize them as gifts of the Spirit.[3]

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, once more, there is very little about the Holy Spirit, but what there is implies much. The writer affirms His inspiration of the writers of the Old Testament, and His concern in the details of the ritual law—that was essential to his argument; but also among the privileges of Christians he mentions "having been made partakers of holy spirit," and he speaks of apostasy from Christ as an insulting of the Spirit of grace, and he alludes to the variety of the Spirit's gifts.[4]

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[1] 1 Pet. i. 11, 12. [2] iv. 14, i. 2. [3] iv. 10 f.

[4] Heb. iii. 7, ix. 8, vi. 4, x. 29, ii. 4. In the Epistle of Jude (ver. 20) we have the remarkable expression "praying in holy spirit," and in St. James (iv. 5) probably "the Spirit which God made to dwell in us." In the Apocalypse our thoughts are directed almost wholly to the Holy Spirit as the inspirer of prophets.

It is thus in St. Paul, St. Luke, and St. John that we specially find the Gospel of the Spirit. But we must be on our guard against supposing that rareness of mention in the other writers necessarily implies either ignorance or disparagement. It is something difficult to account for, almost all down the history of the Church, that the Holy Spirit is comparatively little spoken of except at a few moments of controversy. This strikes us especially in the theology of the Middle Ages; and yet if we think of the three hymns *Veni sancte spiritus*, *Veni creator spiritus*, and *Nunc sancte nobis spiritus* (the hymn for the third hour), and of their influence, we shall be restrained from supposing that the comparative silence in the region of theology means an ignoring of the supreme gift in the spiritual life. So the fact that we have only passing allusions to the Holy Spirit's action by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews and by St. Peter and St. Jude should not suggest to us that their belief was different from St. Paul's and St. John's.

II

The compass of this book will not allow of our pursuing the teaching of the Church concerning the Holy Spirit down the centuries. I must almost content myself with what has been already briefly said in the book on *Belief in Christ*, under the heading of the origin and development of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.[1] And I yield to this necessity with the less reluctance because Dr. Swete has given a full and, as far as I can judge, an impartial account of the history of opinion and definition on this subject in his treatise on *The Holy Spirit in the Ancient Church*.[2] But there are certain points in the development of the doctrine which may be noted. The credit for its formulation lies especially with the

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[1] Chap. viii.

[2] Macmillan, 1912.

Cappadocians of the fourth century, Basil and his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and perhaps principally Gregory of Nazianzus. In the fifth of his great theological orations (A.D. 380)—that on the Holy Spirit—the last-named Father gives a gloomy view of the confusion which had prevailed on this subject within the Church. "Of the wise men among us some considered the Spirit as an activity, some as a creature, some as God; and some have not known which of these opinions to choose, in reverence, as they say, for Scripture, as if it made no clear declaration."[1] This, we can venture to say, with the writings of the earlier centuries in our hands, gives an exaggerated impression. Nevertheless, confusion there certainly was, and, more markedly even than confusion, there was an ignoring of the importance of the subject, due to the preoccupation of men's minds with the controversies about the person of Christ. Gregory pathetically remarks that people have been "nauseated" by the controversies on this latter subject and left without any taste for embarking on any other.[2] "Nevertheless," he adds, "with the Spirit's help the argument shall run and God shall be glorified." And we cannot but feel that the definition which was so largely due to Gregory, according to which the Holy Spirit was determined to be both personal and essential to the being of the one God, was the definition which "the simple and untechnical language of Holy Scripture" (as Basil beautifully calls it) really requires. But about this something more must be said when we come to speak about the development of Christian doctrine. Here I confine myself to noting in the briefest way some points in the theology of the Fathers of the fourth century to whom (with the earlier Origen) we owe the definition.

The first is their extreme unwillingness to go

[1] *Orat. Theol.*, v, 5.

[2] *Op. cit.*, 2.

outside the language and spirit of Scripture in theological definition. They at least are quite free from intellectualism, or the love of definition for its own sake. Thus "It is impossible," says Athanasius, "for created beings, and especially for us men, to speak adequately about things which transcend language. And this being so, it is specially audacious to devise on these subjects newer and unscriptural[1] terms."

Secondly, their profound sense of the practical value of belief both in the personality and in the Godhead of the Holy Spirit. They keep their arguments close to the common experience of Christians.

Thirdly, their refusal to limit the action of the Holy Spirit (or of the Word) within the barriers of the Church. Wherever God acts, they insist, it is through His Word and by His Spirit.

Fourthly, the equipoise they successfully maintain between the conceptions of unity and variety as evidences of the Spirit's presence in the Church. Their doctrine is of course the common Catholic doctrine about the unity of the Church and the sin of schism, but they really deserve the title of Broad Churchmen. They love to insist on the variety which characterizes the work of the Spirit, who is the giver of life as in nature, so in the supernatural life of the Church. He is set to nourish and not to suppress individuality. His presence is marked more by exuberance of vitality than by monotony or uniformity.

III

We must return to our records of the origins of Christianity, especially to examine as carefully as possible the conception of sacraments which we find there. But though it should appear that the sacraments are viewed as ordained instruments and recognized channels for the action of the Spirit, yet it certainly also appears that "the life in the Spirit" was not a life of special occasions only, such as the administration of sacraments, but was the whole of life, lived under a new impulse and in a new power. Christians are to "walk in the Spirit." This is what gave to the earliest Christian life its peculiar characteristic of joy—"joy in the Holy Spirit." "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit, . . . singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord."

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[1] Athan., *Ep.* i., *ad Serap.*, 17. The words are παρὰ τὰς γραφάς. παρά, as Lightfoot said (on Gal. i. 8), may mean "contrary to" or "besides." And in the particular case it is difficult to decide precisely which is meant. The latter meaning would appear to condemn the *Homoousion.*

It was the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church and all its members which was to make practicable a perpetually prayerful mind—"praying in the Holy Spirit." That Holy Spirit, as St. Paul reminds the Roman Christians, is Himself, in His own person, the constant intercessor "according to God"; and, though our intercessions are blind and weak, behind them, to sustain them and to interpret them to God, is the Spirit who perfectly understands the divine purpose.[1] Here indeed is a ground of encouragement in whatever depth of adversity. So it came about that thankfulness and joy become the notes of life in the Spirit. If we pass a generation or two down below the apostolic age, we still find the emphasis on these notes. Thus the prophet Hermas in his *Shepherd* writes:

> "Put off grief from thyself, for it is the sister of doubt and all ill-temper. . . . Dost thou not understand that grief is the most evil of all the spirits, and most to be dreaded by the servants of God, and more than all spirits it destroys man and obliterates the Holy Spirit? Put off, therefore, grief from thyself and do not vex the Holy Spirit which dwells in thee. . . . Clothe thyself in the

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[1] Rom. viii. 26 ff.

> gladness which always has favour with God and is acceptable to Him, and delight thyself in it; for every glad-hearted man does and thinks good things and despises grief."[1]

And there is hardly a period of Christian history where illustrations of the same temper could not easily be found.

Further, this sense of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit in the Church was quickened and made enthusiastic by meetings such as those of which St. Paul gives us such a vivid picture at Corinth—where the "gifts" had special exercise and indeed showed signs of running riot. Let me quote Duchesne[2]:

> "If the Church took over *en bloc* all the religious services of the Synagogue, it added thereto one or two new elements. . . . I refer to the Supper, or sacred repast, and the spiritual exercises.
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> "After the Eucharist,[3] certain inspired persons began to preach and to make manifest before the assembly the presence of the Spirit which animated them. The prophets, the ecstatics, the speakers with tongues, the interpreters, the supernatural healers, absorbed at this time the attention of the faithful. There was, as it were, a liturgy of the Holy Spirit after the liturgy of Christ, a true liturgy with a real presence and communion. The inspiration could be felt—it sent a thrill through the organs of certain privileged persons, but the whole assembly was moved, edified, and even more or less ravished by it and transported into the divine sphere of the Paraclete."

I think exception might be taken to certain details of this picturesque account—as that it makes "preaching" more prominent than St. Paul's words, which are practically our only authority,[4] would warrant. St. Paul seems to complain of the lack of it. It was ecstatic "tongues"—a kind of unintelligent and unintelligible thanksgiving or prayer—that was more in evidence. Also Duchesne seems to assume that the scene described at Corinth would have been found in the churches generally. But St. Paul does not suggest this, though it may be true. He does not say, in seeking to introduce more order into these assemblies, as he does in the matter of marriage, "And so ordain I in all the churches."[1] Nor does he suggest that there was public healing of the sick on these occasions. Nevertheless this enthusiastic cultivation of ecstatic gifts in a public assembly of the Church, this "liturgy of the Spirit," was a very highly valued part of public worship at Corinth and very likely elsewhere. That it was easily liable to abuse is apparent. St. Paul's intimation, "The rest will I set in order when I come," given in connexion with scandals at the love-feast and eucharist, may have struck a chill into the hearts of some enthusiasts; and we do not know how soon these spiritual exercises were "regulated away" like the love-feasts. No doubt in the second century the excesses of the Montanist enthusiasts bred in the Church a deeper repulsion from ecstatic spiritual gifts. Nevertheless the Corinthian meetings afforded an opportunity for unofficial persons to exercise spiritual gifts. We cannot help wondering whether the ordinary excuses for officialism were not allowed too lightly to abolish them. We recall the revivalist meetings and free prayer meetings which before and after the Reformation the Church has frowned upon, but which, with all their admitted excesses and absurdities, have nourished and exhibited a real and intense spirituality. We assent to St. Paul's demand that such manifestations of the Spirit should be kept within the bounds of Church order, but it is difficult to restrain the feeling that in one form or another they ought never to have been abandoned, and that a good deal of the freedom of the Spirit was lost, when they ceased to hold their place among the methods of the Church, and only officials of the Church could lead the public worship.

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[1] Hermas, *Pastor*, Mand. x, 1, 3.

[2] See *Christian Worship*, pp. 48 f. (S.P.C.K.)

[3] I do not know what the authority is for these words.

[4] 1 Cor. xiv.

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[1] 1 Cor. vii. 17.

IV

It does not seem to me to admit of question that St. Paul, in his earlier Epistles, and in the Epistle to the Ephesians, and (if we may quote them as St. Paul's in substance, if not in words) in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, shows himself a genuine sacramentalist.[1] It is a poor plea that St. Paul does not say much about sacraments, when what there is is so plain in the sense it conveys. That comparatively little is said about them means probably that there was no controversy about them. Nor can we admit—in the light of St. Paul's plain statements about the efficacy of baptism—that the words "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel" are intended to disparage baptism by the side of preaching. They mean no more necessarily than that St. Paul regarded baptism as something to be left to his companions, or later to the local presbyters. And he sees a positive advantage in this arrangement, because it hindered the false impression from arising that he was founding a sect of adherents to himself—"Lest any man should say that ye were baptized in my name." But let us consider his sacramental teaching positively.

1. The language he used about baptism is quite plain in its implications. The rite viewed externally

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[1] Let us use this word to express one who believes in spiritual gifts being really bestowed through the external forms; and keep "Sacramentarian" to its proper historical use as another name for those who, in opposition to Luther, held a merely symbolical view of the eucharist—Carlstadt, Bucer, and Zwingli. "Sacramentarian" means the opposite of "sacramentalist." If this distinction is not observed, books about the Reformation become misleading.

is symbolical. The going down into the water and being immersed in it and rising out of it is an acted representation of life through death, the dying to an old life and being buried and rising again to the new life ; but it is more than a symbol. It effects what it symbolizes. It is the transference of a man into a new spiritual sphere. It is baptism " into Christ " or " into the one body "—the Church, which St. Paul calls the body of Christ, or even Christ Himself, the Christ consisting both of the head and the body. And it is the Spirit who effects this transference—" By one Spirit were we all baptized into one body "; and the spiritual effect is regarded as following always on the outward action—" All we who were baptized," " as many of you as were baptized into Christ did [then and there] put on Christ." [1] In the *Ephesians* St. Paul regards the " one baptism," which he enumerates among the bonds of unity, as a cleansing applicable to the Church as a whole, and he seems to distinguish the matter of baptism, i.e. the water, from what is later called " the form," or accompanying words—" having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word." [2] The idea of the effect of baptism conveyed in these phrases is the same as that conveyed in the Epistle to Titus—"according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour."[1]

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[1] Rom. vi. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13; Gal. iii. 27; Col. ii. 12. We should note that in writing to the Romans, whom he had never visited, St. Paul assumes that they must as a matter of course understand what baptism means. " Are ye ignorant " means " Ye cannot surely be ignorant."

[2] Eph. iv. 5, v. 26: see Dr. Armitage Robinson *in loco*: " It is plain that the phrase ἐν ῥήματι indicates some solemn utterance by the accompaniment of which the washing of water is made to be no ordinary bath, but the sacrament of baptism." And he continues: " In the earliest times, however, baptism appears to have been administered ' in the name of Jesus Christ ' (Acts ii. 38, x. 48, cf. viii. 12) or ' the Lord Jesus ' (Acts viii. 16, xix. 5). And on the use of the single formula St. Paul's argument in 1 Cor. i. 13 seems to be based. . . . It is probable then that the ῥῆμα here referred to is the solemn mention of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in connexion with the rite of baptism either as the confession made by the candidate or as the formula employed by the ministrant." I have expressed disagreement with this in the past, but I desire to retract the disagreement. I think the evidence is fairly convincing that at the beginning only the single name was

Incorporation into Christ or His body, the being invested in a new spiritual nature which is Christ, "cleansing" from defilement mediated by washing, a new birth into a new spiritual status—all these phrases convey the same idea, and the process thus variously described is assigned to the same agent, the Holy Spirit, with the same external rite as its instrument. There is then in baptism an outward and visible sign and an inward and spiritual gift, and the two appear to be inseparably connected. The same conception of baptism as a spiritually effective rite is suggested by St. Peter's strong phrase "Baptism (as the reflection of Christ's descent into Hades) now also saves you,"[2] though the words which follow are ambiguous, and by the phrase of the Epistle to the Hebrews[3] "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water."

In the Acts also baptism is regarded as effecting

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used. Down to the time of the Schoolmen this view prevailed, see S. Thomas Aq., *Sum. Th.*, 3^a, qu. 66, a. 6. It would appear (see Dr. Brightman in his essay on "the terms of communion" in *The Early History of the Church and the Ministry*, pp. 344–5: Macmillan, 1918) that in the Roman Church for some centuries there was no baptismal formula pronounced by the ministrant, but only the threefold question of the ministrant, "Dost thou believe," etc., followed by the threefold reply, "I believe," and the threefold affusion. The Church by its "binding" and "loosing" power later settled the precise conditions of valid baptism.

[1] Tit. iii. 5; cf. 1 Cor. vi. 11: "Ye were washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

[2] For the reading and meaning see Dr. Bernard's *Studia Sacra*, pp. 26 ff. (Hodder & Stoughton). I think the words ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν are probably suggested by Ezek. xx. 1, 3 (LXX. ἐπερωτῆσαι), to "enquire of God"; cf. xiv. 7.

[3] Heb. x. 22.

the great transition from the world of sin to the world of righteousness. So Ananias is represented as explaining its meaning to Saul on his conversion. "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (the name of Jesus).[1] And from the beginning the emphasis is on absolution or being set free. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the Holy Spirit."[2] That is, baptism is represented from the moment after Pentecost as an ordinance which the Apostles are commissioned to require, its efficacy lying in absolution and cleansing from sin, and in opening the door to the gift of the Spirit, which, however, is specially connected in the Acts with the following rite of the laying on of hands. And in interpreting the phrases in the Acts and the Epistles we recall of course the words in our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus in the Fourth Gospel, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born anew" (or "from above"), "he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Modern critics, then, such as would assimilate the Church to the mysteries, are quite right in affirming that St. Paul (and the other New Testament writers) believed in baptism as acting *ex opere operato*,[3] if by that is meant simply that he believed a real change of spiritual status to be wrought in all cases through the visible rite. In this we must agree with Dr. Kirsopp Lake against Dr. Kennedy[4]; but when he goes on to suggest that "the attitude which regarded Christianity as a 'mystery religion' inevitably must have led men to exaggerate and misinterpret the Pauline doctrine of freedom, to regard the cleansing from sin gained by the Christian as giving him permission henceforth to do as he liked without incurring guilt, and to consider baptism as an *opus operatum* which secured his admission into the kingdom apart from the character of his future conduct," he is going beyond his evidence. There was a perilous tendency to antinomianism among the Gentile converts, as was natural enough considering their antecedents. But the evidence of St. Paul's language in combating their grievous error would indicate that it was excused by an appeal to the doctrine of free forgiveness greatly misunderstood, or to the triumph of grace over law, or to 'liberty,' rather than by any appeal to the efficacy of the sacraments.[1]

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[1] Acts xxii. 16.
[2] Acts ii. 38.
[3] See Dr. K. Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 385.
[4] See *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, pp. 232 f.

Some of the later books of the New Testament are heavy with anxiety caused by the spread of an immoral idea of religion, coupled with a false asceticism, and worthless speculations about the unknowable and unprofitable. Such a spirit the mysteries would have nourished. But the Church would have none of it; and it succeeded in weathering the storm, and on the whole maintaining for centuries a splendid level both of personal and social morality. It was true to the heritage of ideas which it had derived from the prophets of Israel that religion and morality were strictly indissoluble and that there was no fellowship with God possible except by the way of righteousness. At a certain moment of controversy with the Judaizers, St. Paul used language which might easily be perverted. But about his real meaning there is no mistake. He was as sound on the one end of religion as St. James. In the process of redemption, faith, which opens our hearts to the promises of God and commits our whole life to His will, has a supremely important place: so has baptism, which actually and spiritually introduces us into the covenant of grace and the fellowship of the Spirit; but both alike are relative to the one end. Three times St. Paul states the essentials of religion from three different points of view in controversy with the Judaists. "Neither circumcision," he says, "availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love." "Circumcision," he says again, "is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but a new creature." Finally, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God."[1] Faith, and the recreative act of God, in which baptism holds its great place, are essentials as means; but there is only one essential end, which is actual conformity with God in character and conduct.

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[1] Rom. vi. 1, 15: cf. 1 Cor. vi. 12, x. 23, "All things are lawful for me"; cf. 2 Pet. ii. 19, "Promising them liberty."

When we turn from St. Paul to St. John we find that to him the gift of regeneration is so indissolubly associated with the life of practical goodness into which it serves to admit men, that he speaks as if regeneration and complete moral victory were one and the same thing. "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God." "Whosoever is begotten of God overcometh the world."[2] Elsewhere, even in the immediate context of these words, he shows that sin is sadly possible in Christians[3]; but he is unwilling even to speak of regeneration except as seen in its proper fruits.

The early discipline, and the early ceremonies of baptism, must have impressed deeply upon every convert the moral meaning of being baptized; and there is no subject on which the Christian writers appear to draw on a more profound spiritual experience. But the Christian rites were, of course, designed for adult converts; and when Christianity became a matter of course, and infant baptism the almost universal rule, it ran a great risk of losing its moral power by being treated almost as a charm. I must say a word therefore on the baptism of infants.

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[1] Gal. v. 6, vi. 15; 1 Cor. vii. 19.

[2] 1 John iii. 9, v. 4.

[3] v. 16, i. 8.

It is probable that the Church from the beginning took over from the Jews the practice of baptizing the children of proselytes—"the little proselytes"—with their parents.[1] The phrases in Acts xvi. about both Lydia and the jailer at Philippi—"he was baptized, he and all his," "she and her household"—suggest it. Our Lord's words "Suffer the little children to come unto me" would have encouraged the practice then, as in later ages. St. Paul appears to address children as already "in the Lord" (Eph. vi. 1), and, since he speaks of the children of two parents, only one of whom had become Christian, as "holy" (or consecrated to God—1 Cor. vii. 14), he would probably think of them as fit subjects for baptism. Nevertheless this would have been because the allegiance to Christ of the parent or parents provided a pledge that the child would be educated in the principles of Christ. All the moral circumstances of baptism in early days sharply differentiated it from a charm. It involved for the adults a most definite choice, and such a separation from the old life as made the choice a real adventure of faith. And all the early lore about baptism, and the early ritual, emphasize the element of solemn and deliberate choice—the "dying to live." This situation continued on the whole for some three centuries. Thus the homes of Christians would have been for their children normally nurseries of faith. The real disaster happened when Christianity became the established religion and baptism became really indiscriminate. "Baptism doth represent unto us our profession"—it is the profession of discipleship; and it seems to me that no departure from the principles of Christ has been so serious as that which allowed membership of the Church to become a matter of course. But upon this we must return.

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[1] See Taylor's *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, pp. 55–8, and Sabatier's *La Didaché*, pp. 84–8.

2. Our aim is to make it plain that the sacramental principle was acknowledged in the Church from the beginning, and to indicate the solemn rites in which the principle was recognized. One of these was the laying on of hands. We should gather from the Acts that baptism prepared for the gift of the Holy Spirit, but the laying on of the hands of the apostles was the normal instrument of its bestowal.[1] It has recently[2] been suggested that the narrative in Acts viii. may be interpreted as a kind of experiment, made because the Samaritan Christians had not, as a consequence of their baptism, showed the signs of the possession of the Spirit which were expected—the speaking with tongues. But if this had been in the mind of the writer, he would surely have made it more evident. And it is quite inapplicable to the narrative in chap. xix. I think it must be admitted that St. Luke intends us to understand that the normal ceremony of initiation was baptism followed by the laying on of hands, and that it was so from the beginning. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, when the writer is enumerating the elements of the first teaching of converts, he speaks of the "teaching of baptisms, and the laying on of hands." And they were joined together in the early Christian tradition[3]; the rite

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[1] Acts ii. 38, viii. 17–18, xix. 6. Dr. Chase, *Confirmation in the Apostolic Age*, p. 34, says: "The imposition of hands after baptism is represented as the natural act of the apostles after baptism. No explanation of the origin of the practice is given. . . . Short of an express statement to that effect, we could have no more convincing proof the apostles were following a command which they had received from the Lord Himself."

[2] In *The Acts* (Clarendon Bible), p. 166.

[3] Tertull., *de Bapt.*, 6: "Not that we receive the Holy Spirit in the waters, but cleansed in the waters, we are prepared for the Holy Spirit. . . . Then the hand is laid on us, by benediction invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit."

of baptism, as commonly spoken of, *included* the laying on of hands. And though the words of Christ, according to St. John, attach the action of the Holy Spirit to baptism with water, and St. Paul's words confirm this—"By one Spirit were we all baptized into one body"—yet to the laying on of hands was attached that full indwelling of the Spirit which equipped each "member" to play his part in the royal and priestly body.

There is no mention of what we call "confirmation" in the New Testament except in the Acts and the Hebrews[1]; but it is suggested by St. Paul's habit of referring to the reception of the Holy Spirit as having occurred at a definite moment of the convert's life.[2] Certainly it is St. Paul's teaching that the Spirit was from a definite moment in their lives lodged in their heart and body, and he never suggests that Christians should ask for the Spirit as if they did not already permanently possess Him.

The laying on of hands was hardly regarded in early days as a second sacrament—rather it was regarded as the completion of baptism; and in the tradition of the early centuries it was restricted to the bishop.

3. For the interpretation given to the eucharist in the earliest days of the Church we depend mainly upon a few passages in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, for special abuses, which arose at Corinth alone, caused him to write about what elsewhere he

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[1] Unless we agree with Chase in interpreting 2 Tim. i. 6 of confirmation. See below, p. 763, n. 1.

[2] See Chase, *op. cit.*, pp. 52 and 150, and Swete, *The Holy Spirit in the N.T.*, pp. 202, 204. The latter interprets Gal. iii. 5, "He therefore that supplies to you the Spirit and works miracles among you," of the apostolic minister, rather than of God, pp. 202–3. Cf. Acts xi. 17, acc. to the Bezan text, "Who was I that I should withstand God, *that I should not give them the Holy Spirit when they believed on him?*" But I doubt if these additional words can be authentic.

can take for granted. Nothing can make us feel the insecurity of the " argument from silence," or of the habit of measuring the importance of a subject by the number of references to it, more than the accidental way in which St. Paul is led to refer to the original teaching which he had given at Corinth, and which no doubt he gave in all the churches of his foundation, about both the institution of the eucharist at the Last Supper and the meaning of the rite. Up to a certain point these references are very explicit, and they are most suggestive. They put in the most startling contrast the remarkably domestic and, as we may say, casual character of the celebration with the awful spiritual realities enshrined in it. Here you have a vivid glimpse of " the breaking of the bread," the common meal of fellowship, or " agapè," as it was later called, for which the Christians met daily or at the opening hours of the First Day, i.e. our Saturday evening. It was a quite natural meal, intended to express brotherhood, but capable of being misused, as it actually was at Corinth, to the strangely contrary ends of class distinction and excess. But to such a meal—so unguarded in its circumstances—was attached the commemoration of Christ in the bread broken and the wine cup blessed, which He Himself had appended to the Paschal meal. And the strange words which He had then spoken, " This is my body," " This is my blood," St. Paul would have us interpret with a tremendous realism.

The body of Christ, offered for them in sacrifice, and the blood outpoured is really present under the humble forms of bread and wine. It is present to be their spiritual food. The cup which they bless is a sharing together in the blood, and the bread which they break is a sharing together in the body of Christ. The one bread and the one cup are the symbols and the instruments of their unity. But prior to reception the heavenly realities must be by their faith recognized as present. To fail to "discern the body"[1] is to fall under judgement. To eat the bread or drink the cup unworthily is to be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. And those who have been content with taking the bread and drinking the cup without discernment of the unseen reality have been in fact punished with sickness and sometimes with death.[2]

The particular phrases which St. Paul uses have been scrutinized with more strictness than human language, quite unscholastic human language, will bear. I think we need to trust more than critics and theologians are apt to do to the general impression they make on our imagination. St. Paul's language, I think, gives us a vivid impression of the "breaking of the bread" as it was practised at Corinth, and shows us a fraternal meal easily liable to abuse—not such as we should naturally associate with anything specially sacred. Then into the middle of this scene he introduces the most tremendous spiritual presences. The earthly and the heavenly, the natural and the supernatural, are brought into the most startling proximity. This is sacramentalism indeed. Here we are presented with an institution of Christ for His Church in which, with a divine boldness, the highest things are offered to us under the most familiar earthly forms and conditions. In the subsequent history of the Church we begin to see very soon different schools of interpretation of the words of Christ forming themselves, and later in history controversy has raged about them again and again. But it does not seem to me open to question that St. Paul takes it for granted that there was a real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the elements blessed in the eucharist, such as should strike his converts with an awful dread of a careless approach to them.

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[1] In the context I cannot conceive that "the body" can mean anything but Christ's own body, which is put in conjunction with His "blood" (or life).

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 20 ff., x. 16 ff.

No doubt steps were taken by St. Paul to make impossible the particular scandals he was confronted with. We know that very soon the eucharist proper was separated from the love-feast. But for a long time, especially, it would appear, in the Church of Rome, the natural basis of the sacrament in a fraternal meal remained evident. In an *Ordo* of the eighth century we have a description of the single Mass celebrated in Rome on the Sunday by the bishop for his assembled flock. What would have struck us, if we could have been present, would have been what followed the solemn reading of the Gospel—the gathering from the assembled multitude of their offerings, a great store of bread and wine, and "the spreading of the table-cloth" on the altar to receive the oblations; then when the eucharistic prayer had been said by the bishop and the gifts in great part consecrated, we should have seen them returned to the whole congregation which had offered them, in bags and flagons, now made to be the divine food which was to sanctify them as one people in Christ.[1] Surely we may say that St. Paul would approve of no ritual of the Christian sacrifice which did not leave its social nature apparent. "We, the many, are one bread, one body: for we are all partakers of the one bread."

With the sacrament of ordination I am to deal immediately. What I am seeking to do in these pages is only to make evident that the Church from its origin was unmistakably and deeply sacramental—

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[1] I have described the service in more detail in *Reservation* (by the Bishops of Oxford and Chelmsford: Robert Scott, 1917). I would refer also to *The Body of Christ* (John Murray), where I have dealt with eucharistic doctrine more at length.

that it certainly believed in divine gifts ministered through earthly rites; and I have illustrated this from the three instances of baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist. Harnack, in his brilliant work on *The Expansion of Christianity*,[1] describes, and in part parodies, the sacramental religion of the early Church. Then he adds, "*Ab initio sic non erat* is the protest that will be entered. 'From the beginning it was not so.' Perhaps. But one must go far back to find that beginning, so far back that this extremely brief period now eludes our search entirely." It is true that it entirely eludes our search; but the question is whether we have any justification for believing that it ever existed.[2]

V

The outward unity of the Church, the body of Christ, as it appears in the New Testament and in the subsequent history of the Church, was guarded against the disruptive tendencies of humanity especially by three bonds: first, by the authority of the common faith or word of God, of which we are to speak in the chapters which follow; secondly, by the need to seek the gifts of God in the sacraments of the society; thirdly, by the obligation of adherence to the apostolic ministry.

Elsewhere[3] I have sought to examine at length the grounds for holding (1) that the principle of the apostolic succession in the ministry of the Church was one of its most uncontested principles from the middle of the second century downwards; (2) that the books of the New Testament and the indications of the sub-apostolic age supply the justification for this principle. The controversy on the subject covers a very wide field and I cannot here repeat the argument. I can only ask that it be considered, as is not, I fear, often done, as a whole. Here I shall only concern myself with the evidence supplied by the documents of the apostolic and sub-apostolic period, and I shall seek to indicate the chief points on which any enquirer must make up his mind, at the same time showing the answer to which it seems to me the evidence points.

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[1] Engl. trans., i. 293.

[2] On the "seven sacraments," see Appended Note B, p. 769.

[3] I.e. in *The Church and the Ministry* (Longmans), published in 1888 and recently republished after careful revision by Professor C. H. Turner. The Professor has also recently embodied the conclusions of his historical studies in a little tract, which can be read in a quarter of an hour, on *The Apostolic Succession* (among "The Congress Books," No. 33).

1. The root question is whether, prior to all development suggested, or rendered necessary, by circumstances, the Church does appear, even before Pentecost, as a body already equipped with officers holding pastoral authority by Christ's appointment in the persons of the apostles. Those who oppose this position are apt to refer to the great authority of Dr. Hort. But we must not allow ourselves to be enslaved to any single scholar or group of scholars, however eminent. We must seek to exercise our free judgement. Like Dr. Mason,[1] I find the section of Dr. Hort's posthumously published work on *The Christian Ecclesia* which deals with this subject quite unconvincing,[2] nothing else than an over-subtle scholar's paradox. As we have seen,[3] St. Paul certainly believed that authority, which must be called official, had been given by God to the Apostles, and to himself among them. He claims this authority not only in the churches of his foundation, but in the Roman Church, which he had never visited. And the same impression is made on our minds by the narrative of the Acts. That such authority was

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[1] See *Early History of the Church and the Ministry*, p. 41.

[2] See *The Church and the Ministry*, Appended Note M.

[3] See above, p. 688; for the Roman church, see Rom. i. 1, 5, xi. 13, xv. 15 f.; for the Acts, above, p. 667.

solemnly and deliberately granted by our Lord is stated in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, and is implied in St. Mark and St. Luke.[1] The Church from Clement of Rome downwards accepted the fact as obvious ; and I think the evidence constrains us to assent.

2. We have to ask ourselves whether the existence of such officers in the Christian society, believed to have been appointed by divine authority, and put in trust of the "mysteries of God"—and not of doctrine only, but of the ministry of grace as a whole[2] —does not involve the principle of a priesthood, whether the Greek word *hiereus* is used for them or no. The ideas attached to the particular word, whether among Jews or Greeks, might very naturally have made the Christian Church somewhat slow to adopt it. But is not the principle there ? It is indeed protected against abuse by certain safeguards : by the fullest recognition of the equal freedom of approach to God belonging to all those who share the same Spirit ; by the openness to all alike of the divine 'mysteries,' and the absence of any idea of a 'reserved' doctrine ; by the moral teaching which should have made it impossible to regard any sacraments administered by priests as charms which could be beneficial without moral response ; and by the important share in the discipline and worship of the Church assigned to all its members. Let us say that the priesthood of the Christian ministry is a representative, not a vicarious priesthood. Still, in the persons of the Apostles, it has its powers not from the people, but from God. Men must, it seems, normally seek the gift of the Holy Ghost from

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[1] See above, pp. 665 ff.

[2] 2 Cor. iii. 6 and Rom. i. 11. We notice that in Rom. xv. 15 St. Paul justifies his "bold" tone to the Romans by the nature of his office. Dr. Moffatt translates his words, "I have written to you with a certain freedom, in virtue of my divine commission as a priest of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the service of God's Gospel."

apostolic hands; and the "stewardship" of these officers, granted them by Christ, gave them powers of "binding" and "loosing," "absolving" and "retaining sins" with a divine sanction, which could not be ignored, and which appear at the last resort to inhere in their special office, though they seek to exercise them in union with the whole body of the faithful. Thus this is the question—Does not the spiritual life of the members of Christ appear in the New Testament as in manifold ways dependent upon their adherence to the Apostles and those who shared their ministry with them? If this is so, is it not the case that we cannot repudiate sacerdotalism, but only certain forms of it or abuses of it? [1]

3. The apostles had a certain function as witnesses and founders which necessarily died with them; but St. Paul plainly regards his pastoral office as one to be perpetuated, and so presumably did the others.

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[1] There is nothing in the New Testament which gives any indication as to who might or who might not preside at the eucharist. The eucharist was instituted apparently in the presence of the Twelve only (Mark xiv. 17), and was entrusted to them in the words "Do this [celebrate this rite] in remembrance of me." And it was a symbol or instrument of the unity of the Church such as would naturally be in the hands of the officers of the Church. So in Clement, at the end of the first century, it is the traditional function of the presbyter-bishops to "offer the gifts"; and by Ignatius it is said, "Let that be esteemed a valid eucharist which is celebrated by the bishop or someone to whom he has intrusted it." And in the *Didaché* the election of "bishops and deacons" is made apparently specially with a view to the celebration of the "pure sacrifice" of the Church, in the absence of the apostles and prophets. And in Justin Martyr the "president of the brethren" celebrates.* Dr. Hamilton (*People of God*, bk. ii, chap. vi, pp. 110 ff.) works out the evidence for the connexion of mon-episcopacy with the 'presidency' of the eucharist. But there is nothing about the matter in the New Testament. Nothing seems to me more certain than that as regards matters of order in the Church there can be no agreement except on the basis of the belief that the legislative ordering of the Church, as it came about in course of time, has a divine sanction in proportion to its unanimity and constancy.

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* Clem., c. 44; Ignat., *ad Smyrn.* 8; *Did.*, xv, 1; Justin, *Apol.*, i, 65.

And we see the process beginning especially in the Acts and the Pastoral Epistles. We see local church officers, the seven, the presbyter-bishops, the deacons, being appointed. And whether they are elected for their office by the people or designated by prophets,[1] they are in any case appointed[2] by the apostles, or later by apostolic delegates themselves appointed by the apostles, like Timothy and Titus (Tit. i. 5).[3] Towards the end of the first century Clement of Rome gives us in the simplest manner a history of the Christian ministry down to his own time.[4] "Christ," he says, "is from God and the Apostles from Christ; all took place in both cases in order by the will of God. . . . Preaching then in country and town they appointed their firstfruits, when they had tested them in the Spirit, for bishops [i.e. presbyter-bishops] and deacons of those who were about to become believers." Then he adds that "Our apostles knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be contention about the title to the episcopate. Therefore on this account, having received perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the aforesaid [presbyter-bishops and deacons], and subsequently gave an additional injunction, that, if they fell asleep, other approved men should succeed to their ministry." And the next sentence appears clearly to interpret this "additional injunction": "They, then, who were appointed by those [apostles] or *subsequently by other distinguished men with the consent of the whole flock*, etc." The additional injunction then was the provision that, after the death of the first generation of local clergy (when the apostles also presumably would have gone), there should be other distinguished men who, not arbitrarily, but with the consent of the whole flock, should appoint their successors. Timothy and Titus appear to be examples of this class of 'distinguished men' or notables.

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[1] Acts vi. 3, 5, xiii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 18.

[2] Acts vi. 3, 6, xiv. 23.

[3] Only in the *Didaché* do we get mention of "election" without mention of any other kind of appointment. But the *Didaché* is a manual for the local church, and the ordination, if ordination there was, would have lain with the superior order of apostles or prophets of whom the book speaks. See *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 251–2.

[4] On Clement, see *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 273 ff.

We cannot trace with certainty the apparently different processes by which the transition was effected between the state of things described by Clement and that of later Church history. Clement, we have seen, presents a state of things in which there was at Corinth a local ministry of presbyter-bishops and deacons subordinated, in respect of the appointment of their successors, to certain men of distinction, not presumably belonging to any one city. We know that, not twenty years later, Ignatius of Antioch can speak of the threefold local ministry of bishop, presbyters, and deacons as (1) an apostolic institution, (2) necessary to the constitution of a church, (3) of world-wide acceptance.[1] At the moment of his writing this last point may have been an exaggeration; but it very speedily became true. And whatever was the precise method of transition in particular cases, it seems to me that there is no good reason to doubt that it came about on the principle of succession, i.e. that the elected officers of the churches had always received their commission, in whatever grade, from those who in the generation previous had held—from apostles[2] in the first instance—not only the authority themselves to minister, but the authority also to appoint others to the ministry. This is what is meant by the phrase 'ordination from above,' by contradistinction from mere election by the members of the Church ('from below').

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[1] On Ignatius, see *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 258.

[2] It must be recognized that the term "apostles" covered not only the Twelve but Paul and Barnabas, and Andronicus and Junias, and others unknown who were held to have received their commission from Christ Himself.

I think the only occasion for scruple in maintaining this position lies in the problem of the prophets. There were in the Church 'prophets' and 'teachers' more or less closely associated with apostles, and of these we should suppose that the prophets at least were persons who were accepted simply because there was a divine gift of inspiration recognized in them; and the narrative in the Acts xiii., coupled with the *Didaché*, would suggest that they were recognized as priests for ministry as well as prophets for admonition. This may have been the case; but when the question is that of the perpetuation of the ministry, the only document which suggests any continuance of this kind of authority in the prophets is the *Didaché*; and, if that is a genuine document of the sub-apostolic age (as I believe), it represents a group of churches outside the main stream of Church life; and the highly dubious character of the prophets there described shows the wisdom of the Church at large in refusing to recognize them in any other capacity than as preachers, like Hermas.

4. The method of appointment to a church office is described in 2 Tim. i. 6, in an unmistakably sacramental phrase, "For this cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands."[1] There is no like phrase in St. Paul's 'undisputed' Epistles, nor in the Acts, as concerns ordination to pastoral office, but if you gather the references in the New

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[1] I cannot doubt that this refers to ordination and not to confirmation, as Dr. Chase would have us believe. I think mention of the spirit of *σωφρονισμός* (see Swete, *Holy Spirit in the N.T.*, pp. 245–6) and the whole character of the context indicate this. So also Dr. Mason and Dr. Parry. It has been usual to couple together 2 Tim. i. 6 with 1 Tim. iv. 14, and to suppose that Timothy was ordained through prophecy, indicating the divine approval, by (*διά*) the laying on of St. Paul's hand *accompanied with* (*μετά*) the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. This seems to make a little too much depend on the particular prepositions used in different epistles. I should have thought both *διὰ* and *μετά* could describe the act of ordination; and St. Paul in

Testament, so incidental in their occurrence, to the laying on of hands as the method of admission to Church office,[1] is it not unreasonable to question that it was the regular method—the more so as it seems to have passed over to the Church from the Jews, and in the Old Testament appears as a symbol of transmission from one to another of authority or status or guilt? And it would surely have carried with it the same kind of sacramental implication as the laying on of hands in confirmation. Undoubtedly in St. Paul's view, the "teachers," "helps," and "governments," whom he mentions among Christ's gifts to the Church, were as much "charismatic," as much empowered for their function by a gift of the Spirit, as apostles or prophets or workers of miracles.[2] It was the Holy Spirit made men presbyter-bishops (Acts xx. 28).

5. In Church history we constantly find the Church exercising its function of "binding" and "loosing" in matters which concern the ministry. We witness the careful delimitation of the specific functions of each order of ministers and the admission of the validity of baptism by laymen. We witness the decision—accepted at last fully in the West—of the validity of ordinations as well as baptisms conferred in heretical and separated bodies of Christians. Again, we have a controversy—never perhaps decided—as to whether the undoubted distinction of bishops and presbyters in the Church tradition was originally

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one passage emphasizes his own pre-eminent part in the action, and in the other associates himself (like St. Peter) with the whole presbyterate. Harnack (*Law and Constitution*, p. 26) is very emphatic on the sacramental character of ordination from the first: "That the laying on of hands was regarded as conferring the charisma necessary to the office is obvious from the passages in Timothy, and it is improbable that these express only a later idea. The laying on of hands was thus certainly sacramental."

[1] Besides 2 Tim. i. 6, see Acts vi. 6, xiii. 3 (appointment for a particular mission), 1 Tim. iv. 14 and v. 22.

[2] See Dr. Armitage Robinson's excellent essay in *The Early History*, pp. 60 ff.

of divine or only of ecclesiastical authority. But there are two assumptions which appear always to be taken for granted in these controversies: (1) that when Christ founded or refounded the Church He instituted a ministry in the persons of the apostles which was to be continued down the course of history by a process of sacramental ordination—so that this continuous ministry was, so to speak, the backbone of the Church and the visible instrument of its coherence and continuity; and (2) that the settlement of questions of order lay with the Church, which had been granted the power of legislation in matters of discipline with a divine sanction.

Nothing seems to me more certain than that the New Testament documents give no decisive indication of the precise form the ministry was to take. But the actual peace and cohesion of the Church in each generation depends on there being decisive regulation on the subject of the functions of the different orders of ministers. If so, unity is in fact only possible if we accept the authority of the Church in such practical matters as claiming the obedience of individual churchmen or sections of churchmen, unless indeed it could be shown that there was anything in their ordinances antagonistic to the spirit of the New Testament.

VI

The object of this chapter has been to give a general view of the Religion of the Spirit as it is presented to us in the documents of the New Testament; and it has been specially directed to show that as in Jesus Christ the Word took flesh, so, when the Holy Spirit came from the ascended Christ to perpetuate His work in the world, for Him too, in another sense, a " body was prepared " which was the Church, the reformed Israel. Thus there was not from the beginning any distinction between membership of Christ and membership of His "body." And the body which St. Paul speaks of in a strain of such glorious exultation in the Epistle to the Ephesians is no other than the actual historical Church with all its imperfections—the beginnings of which are recorded in the Acts, and which found its bonds of unity in the common faith, the sacraments of fellowship, and the authority of the apostolic ministry.

Sometimes it appears as if it were hardly necessary to argue this point any longer. Luther's contention, so long prevalent in Protestantism, that the Church, of which such lofty things are spoken by Paul, was not any visible body, in which the evil is mingled with the good, like the church at Corinth, but the invisible company of the elect, who may or may not be members of any visible church and whose names are known only to God—this doctrine appears to-day almost to have vanished.[1]

Perhaps its place is taken by Sohm's theory, which would distinguish a moment in the life of the early Church—a moment which is marked more or less distinctly by the Epistle of Clement—when the *Catholic* idea of the Church, with its *official* conception of the ministry and *legal* conception of an authoritative law, overwhelmed the earlier "religious or charismatic" conception. The theory is stated and criticized by Harnack in an appendix to his *Constitution and Law of the Church*, where he points out that official authority already belongs to an apostle in St. Paul's Epistles, and the idea of a binding law is already present there, as also in the canon of the Jerusalem Council. The idea of an

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[1] See above, Appended Note B, p. 652; and on "the heavenly Jerusalem," see Appended Note C to this chapter, p. 770. See also *Essays on Christian Unity* (Clarke, 1923), by Dr. William Robinson, the Principal of Overdale College, chap. iii, a book which is surely a hopeful sign in the movement towards reunion.

"officer" and a "law" is already present in the original conception of the Church as the true Israel.[1]

We may take it for truth, then, that as represented in the New Testament, the New Covenant, like the Old, is with the community, not with separated individuals, and that Christianity from the beginning was the religion of a sacramental Church. The bearing of this consideration on the circumstances of the present day we must seek to consider later.

In conclusion, I will content myself with enumerating very briefly the leading considerations which commend sacramentalism to our understanding.

1. The principle that spiritual values and forces are mediated through material processes is a principle that runs through nature as a whole. I have already illustrated this by reference to the sexual method by which a spiritual (human) personality is brought into being. But it admits of much wider illustration. Truth and beauty and goodness are spiritual values and forces. But all of them within our experience arise and become effective only under material forms. And human life in all its forms of fellowship is full of natural sacraments, such as the lover's kiss and the friend's handshake and the soldier's flag, which both express and kindle the respective feeling.

2. The whole history of religions or religion, as recent investigation unfolds it to us, tends to emphasize the principle that religion is first of all a *group* consciousness or tribal consciousness, and that *individual* religion develops later and under its shelter. And the tribal character of religion everywhere expresses itself in what may be called in a broad sense 'sacramental' forms.

3. Within the Christian religion the Incarnation is

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[1] I hope Dr. Armitage Robinson's essay on "The Primitive Ministry" in *The Early History of the Church and Ministry* will put an end to the vogue of distinguishing "charismatic" from official. In the New Testament the local officers are certainly regarded as "charismatic."

the central fact—but that is the mediation of the spiritual, the divine presence and grace, through the flesh. The method of the Spirit in the Church and the sacraments is thus properly called an extension of the principle and fact of the Incarnation.

4. The sacraments are social ceremonies ; and the mediation of spiritual gifts through sacraments of the society presents itself therefore as the divinely chosen means by which our fellowship in the life of God is tied to our membership in the appointed human brotherhood. We cannot become united to God in isolation or in a merely self-chosen society.

5. By the sacraments the highest gifts are made equally accessible to persons of all stages of culture. Spiritual things are hard of intellectual comprehension. In an intellectual form only the intellectual few could assimilate them. But experience shows that the youngest and the least educated can by simplicity of faith appreciate and assimilate spiritual gifts embodied in symbolical rites, such as washing, and receiving the blessing of the hand, and feeding on bread and wine.

6. Emotion is an extraordinarily powerful force in religion, and the uneducated are even more emotionally susceptible than the educated. But emotion is also variable and delusive. We are enthusiastic and cold, elated and depressed, by turns, and we know not why. In two ways the religion of Christ would direct our attention away from our emotions. Partly by making our acts, that is our will, the test of genuineness, and not our feelings. Partly also by the institution of sacraments. By sacraments, spiritual gifts, such as regeneration and reception of the Spirit and absolution, and communion with God in Christ, are imparted to us objectively, in outward acts and signs. We are assured by a divine guarantee that at a certain moment we were made members of Christ and did receive the Spirit, and were set free

from sin and did receive Christ Himself to be our spiritual food; and the injunction given us is addressed to our wills, not to our emotions. We are bidden to act as sons of God and sharers in Christ, knowing by an outward sign that we are so. Our reliance is to be on the word and act of God, while the joy of responsive emotion comes or goes.

APPENDED NOTE A (see p. 732)

THE GIFT OF TONGUES AS REPRESENTED IN ACTS II

The conception of the gift of tongues in Acts ii. appears at first sight to be in marked conflict with the conception to which 1 Cor. xiv. 2–34 would lead us. In the first passage it appears to be a gift of speaking foreign languages (ver. 11). In the latter it is a non-rational kind of utterance, alike unintelligible to the speaker and his audience—hardly what we should call a language at all. But the difference must not be exaggerated. The idea that Acts ii. describes what we commonly call a gift of using foreign languages, such as would be available for preaching, is not borne out in the text. Like St. Paul, St. Luke apparently describes the tongues as an utterance addressed to God (1 Cor. xiv. 2, 15–17; Acts ii. 11). Also he describes it as a simultaneous utterance, and an utterance which could be mockingly described as the senseless clamour of a group of drunken men (ver. 13). There is no suggestion in the Acts that " tongues " were used for preaching. On the other hand, St. Paul (1 Cor. xiv. 21) compares the " tongues " to a foreign language, the unintelligible language of strangers. There seem to be two alternative conclusions about the matter: either that the phenomenon of the day of Pentecost was really special—something like the gift of tongues as St. Paul describes it, combined with the gift of " interpretation " in the mind of the foreign hearers, so that they heard, or seemed to hear, the combined ecstatic shouts of praise, each in his own language wherein he was born; or that the account which St. Luke received and reported was not accurate in detail. We should be ready for either conclusion, but we have no sufficient grounds for deciding between them.

APPENDED NOTE B (see p. 756)

THE ENUMERATION OF SEVEN SACRAMENTS

Besides baptism, the laying on of hands in confirmation and in ordination, and the eucharist, do we discover in the New Testament any other sacraments, i.e. sacred rites of the community believed to carry a divine gift with them? Not, I suppose, in the strict sense. But the judgement and absolution of the Church, the remitting or retaining of sins, was sacramental, in the sense that, though we do not hear of any outward rite in which it was expressed (as later by the laying on of hands upon the penitent in absolution), the judgement and the absolution were human acts which were believed to carry with them a divine power by the appointment of Christ. And unction as described by St. James was an outward ceremony by which a gift, though it was physical rather than spiritual, the gift of healing, was mediated. This could be described as sacramental in a sense. Finally, marriage, though there was no ecclesiastical ceremony at first attached to it, might also be so described because the mutual pledge carried with it a divine sanction. Thus was made up a list of seven sacraments by which the life of the Christian was surrounded from the cradle to the grave.

The enumeration of seven sacraments we first find in Gregory of Bergamo (twelfth cent.), but his list is made up of baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, ordination, marriage, Holy Scripture, and the taking an oath. There was no *tradition* of seven sacraments. It is Peter Lombard in the next century who gives us the seven with which we are familiar. No doubt we must maintain the pre-eminence of baptism, completed in confirmation, and the eucharist, and place ordination next to them; but the other three, though they fail to correspond to the stricter definition, may well be admitted as sacraments in a more general sense.

APPENDED NOTE C (see p. 765)

THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

The nearest approach to a doctrine of an invisible Church to be found in the New Testament is the idea of "the heavenly Jerusalem" (Gal. iv. 26; Heb. xii. 22; Apoc. iii. 12 and xxi.). In the Apocalypse it is represented as existing in heaven, but it is to be manifested on earth at the consummation. I suppose this is equivalent to saying it is the *predestined* consummation. But in the Epistle to the Galatians we are already members of it. It is already "our mother" (St. Paul appears to be quoting Ps. lxxxvi. [LXX], *Μήτηρ Σειών, ἐρεῖ ἄνθρωπος*). So in the Epistle to the Hebrews we are already "come to" it. I suppose the idea is that of the Church as having its ground where Christ is "in the heavenlies," and where the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect are. In this sense the Church is heavenly and invisible, but the visible churches on earth are the earthly limbs of the heavenly body or the earthly representatives of the heavenly society, substantially one with it.

CHAPTER V

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

We have had the opportunity of reading many books, written from different points of view, on authority and its function in society generally, and particularly in the maintenance of religion, which certainly presents itself in history not merely as an intuition of the individual, but as a social tradition.[1] And these books will satisfy most men on two points—that, on the one hand, authority must play a great and even predominant part in the maintenance of society, and of the heritage of truth in general, and of religion in particular, so that it is folly to seek to disparage authority on account of its errors and crimes, as if we could in any sense do without it; but that, on the other hand, authority or tradition, alike in religion and in every other department of human life, is always liable to become conventional, one-sided, narrow, and tyrannical, and needs constant correction by the action of the individual conscience and reason, and by the voice of the prophets, awakening, discovering, protesting, and demanding revision; also that the authority of conscience, when a man has done his best to open his conscience to the light, must be recognized at the last resort as supreme for him.[2] He "can do no other." Thus the traditionalist and the protestant, the conservative and the radical, the disciplinarian and the prophet, are each needed in the world and in the Church, and each in due measure have their gift from God.

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[1] One of the best of recent books for opening our mind to the idea of authority and the questions arising therefrom is *Authority in Religion*, by J. H. Leckie (Clark, 1909). It is written from the standpoint of a Presbyterian.

[2] It will be remembered how strenuously Cardinal Newman vindicated the legitimacy of this principle by Roman Catholic

So far, perhaps, we shall find common agreement. But this agreement on general principles in their abstract form is found to give us very little satisfaction. For it is not in the abstract region that our difficulties lie, but in their particular application, whether what is in question is authority constraining us to action or authority constraining us to belief.

Thus, for example, Greek literature has left us two classical pictures of incomparable power, the one of obedience, the other of disobedience to the authority of the state or ruler, both of which command our almost unhesitating admiration. The one is Plato's picture of Socrates, in the *Crito*, in prison and under unjust sentence of immediate death, earnestly implored by a venerable friend to avail himself at the last minute of an opportunity of escape, and steadfastly refusing, because, though the State is just now doing him wrong, yet it is his parent and his master, and he has entered into a covenant of obedience to it, and he will not meet wrong with wrong or break his covenant to save his life. The other is Sophocles' picture of Antigone protesting in face of the Ruler that she ought to obey God rather than man—the law of the gods which bids her bury her brother rather than the command of man which prohibits it. I say we give a whole-hearted assent both to Socrates' refusal of disobedience and Antigone's refusal of obedience to the normal authority. But we still find ourselves tortured and unenlightened, in particular cases, where the diffi-

standards in his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, pp. 55–56 (Pickering, 1875), ending up with the words, "Certainly, if I am obliged to bring religion into after-dinner toasts . . . I shall drink—to the Pope, if you please—still, to conscience first, and to the Pope afterwards."

culty is to find out which principle ought to be applied. Thus, during the history of the Tractarian or Catholic movement in the Church of England, how many a clergyman, commanded by his bishop to abstain from doing or teaching this or that, which the principles of the Church, as he has come to understand them, appear to enjoin or permit, has been tormented by the difficulty of satisfying his conscience whether *in this case* to refuse obedience to his normal ruler would be wilfulness and party spirit, or whether he must stand stoutly for the higher principle and defy his ruler, saying, like the apostles confronted by their normal ecclesiastical authorities, "We ought to obey God rather than men." The difficulty lies not in the general principles, but in their balance and application.

Again, in cases where authority is asserted in order to constrain a man to belief—when he is barely told that "the Church teaches" this or that doctrine, which his private judgement tells him is lacking in evidence, which makes no appeal to his conscience, and for which he finds no support in the New Testament—he may have no doubt about the authority of the Church in general or the duty of the individual to reverence it, but he may still want to know in what sense "the Church" can be truly said to teach this particular doctrine, and also whether the authority of the Church, whether the catholic or the local Church, is of such a nature that it has the right to express itself in this peremptory and unqualified form.

For there is, especially in discussions concerning religion, and not only among people who value the name of Catholic, a great tendency to identify authority with absolute authority. People so often seem to take it for granted that they have to choose between a state of religious anarchy and an authority which is peremptory with regard to conduct and belief alike. And so much of the talk about authority is vitiated by a lack of clearness in our ideal of authority.

I think, however, that those who believe the Christian religion to be in some real sense divine—and such belief at this stage of our argument we take for granted—will find their greatest assistance in solving the perplexing questions which arise as to the nature and limits of authority in religion, not in abstract argument, but in watching the authority of the Church as it comes into being in the prophets of the Old Testament, and as it finds its culmination and centre in our Lord and its development in the administration of the apostles and in the early and undivided Church. Of course we shall be challenged to show why the principles of the early Church should be held to be regulative for succeeding ages. For the appeal to the primitive Church appears not to be in favour to-day. We shall try to meet this challenge later on.[1] But at least in Christ and His apostles, Christians of all kinds acknowledge something formative for all ages; and if we can note certain marked characteristics in their idea and exercise of authority we shall have gained solid ground on which to stand.

I

The authority of the Church is as old as the Church—that is to say, it goes back behind the New Testament to the Old; and its ground is the word of the Lord. The assumption on which it is based is that God, the sovereign ruler of men, can make His mind and will known to men, and has done so through His prophets. This is the word of the Lord given in many parts and many manners, which it was the function of the Church of the Old Covenant to keep in memory and to obey, and of the authorities of the Church to uphold and interpret. "What was the advantage of the Jew (over the Gentile)? Much every way. First, that to them were intrusted the oracles of God."[1] And this self-revelation of God was essentially dogmatic; that is to say, it was presented not by way of argument or as a conclusion of reasoning, but as the word of God, not to be gainsaid.

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[1] See below, chap. vii, p. 828, on the theory of development as applied to Christian doctrine and institutions, and chap. viii, p. 864, on the authority of Scripture; cf. pp. 965–6.

And the next point that we notice about it is that it was primarily moral—a challenge to the *conscience* of men and a strict requirement that they should conform their life, social and individual, to its demands. It involved indeed intellectual propositions about God—as that there was only one God, one object of worship, one almighty creator and sustainer of all that is, and one ultimate judge of all rational beings; and that this one God has moral character—that He is righteous and good—in such sense that no ritual service of Him has in His sight any value whatever, if it be not also moral service—the conformity of human life to His justice, goodness, purity, and truth. It involved also certain propositions about man's nature—as that he is a free and responsible being; and that he is sinful and needs to be redeemed; and certain propositions concerning the purpose of God—as that He has a glorious purpose for men which is ultimately to find world-wide accomplishment, but which at present has Israel for its channel and lays upon Israel special privileges and special obligations.[2] These dogmas are constantly and more and more clearly implied in the progressive self-revelation of God in the Old Testament. Nevertheless they are always given by way of supplying the motive for what remains the primary appeal—the appeal to men to live a certain kind of life and to conform their private and common conduct to a certain moral requirement.

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[1] Rom. iii. 1, 2.

[2] It is very well worthy of notice that these fundamental doctrines, which are implied in the message of God to Israel and which pass from Israel to the Catholic Church, are, intellectually speaking, the most difficult dogmas. I cannot doubt that so long as men continue to believe that God is one and the Creator of all that is, and that God is love, and that man is really free and responsible, they will not in the long run find much difficulty about what are called the "specifically Christian" doctrines. On the contrary,

All this "word of God" our Lord, when He came "not to destroy, but to fulfil," accepts and takes for granted, and makes it the foundation on which He builds. Accordingly He accepts and recognizes the authority of the ancient Church of which He was a member. He is even recorded to have said, "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not."[1] Nevertheless, His recognition of the authority of the contemporary Church—and the recognition of it which He claimed from His disciples—was very far from being unconditional. He revised the substance of the old law; and that He alone could do—that was not within the competence of the successors of Moses. But what they ought to have attended to was that their authority reposed upon "the word of God," and ought to have been kept true to its norm. In their precepts about the Sabbath, and their religious requirements generally,[2] they had forgotten its great principles. In their zeal for detail, and for the maintenance of their own

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the dogmas of the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Holy Trinity, the Church, the sacraments, and life eternal are really the necessary intellectual corollaries, supports, and justifications of the fundamental doctrines that we inherit from Israel. It is very suggestive that St. Peter should describe the purpose of the atoning death and resurrection of Christ as being "that your faith and hope might be in God" (1 Pet. i. 21). The most important articles of faith must not be confused with those that have been most disputed, or the subject of ecclesiastical definitions.

[1] Matt. xxiii. 2, 3. This saying, as reported, must be interpreted in the light of xv. 1–14.

[2] See Matt. xii. 1–13, xv. 1–14.

dignity, they had neglected "the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith." They had made the word of God of none effect by their tradition. They had looked to precedent and not to moral principle. It is for this reason that they fell under His scathing condemnation.

I cannot but think that in Christian history the maintainers of ecclesiastical authority have in general given very much less attention than was its due to our Lord's startling attitude towards the existing ecclesiastical authority, the legitimacy of which He recognized. It is not merely that He criticizes the lives of the persons who hold the authority. It is that He criticizes the nature of the authority they thought it their business to exercise—they ignored the ground of all true authority in the word of God, which is above all else the expression of a moral will. Certainly Christ re-established in the renewed Israel which is the Church the legislative and judicial authority which He criticized, and entrusted it afresh to constituted officers, and gave it a fresh spiritual sanction. These points have been argued already. No doubt also He promised to be with His Church all the days and endowed it with the Spirit, so that the first council of the Church dared to ascribe its decision to the Holy Spirit co-operating with them. But I see nowhere any ground for believing that the officers under the New Covenant would be protected from error, if they should behave like the officers of the Old.[1]

But let us advance from the Old Covenant to the New. The Inaugurator of the New Covenant speaks with more than prophetic authority. Sometimes indeed He argued; and we shall come back upon our Lord's use of argument. But in the main certainly He did not argue. He affirmed as one who had a right to affirm infallibly. Sometimes, as we shall see, He gave men glimpses into divine mysteries which became the basis of Church doctrines. But there can be no question that in the main His teaching was moral. He presented a way of life to men's hearts and wills. The critical matter in His eyes is the opening of their hearts to the light and the surrender of their wills to obey. The constant assumption is that "he that willeth to do God's will, shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God."[1]

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[1] See, on the infallibility of the Church, the Appended Note, p. 825.

Thus when the Church of the New Covenant went out into the world, the first name for it was "The Way."[2] Its primary function was to exhibit among men a new way of life—a new kind of fellowship with God realized in a new kind of fellowship of men. People talk disparagingly of a "merely ethical gospel," and contrast it with the Gospel of the New Testament. Quite rightly. The new law for the Church was warmed and inspired by a gospel about God and redemption—about Father and Son and Spirit—which made it something very different from a mere code of ethics. But nevertheless it was primarily as a way of life to be lived by a community, claiming to be both the true Israel and the New Humanity, that the religion of Christ went out into the world and converted men. The bulk of the New Testament is ethical teaching. It describes and enforces "the Way." Even in the most doctrinal epistles this will be found to be surprisingly true.[3]

Now, this primacy of the moral appeal in the message of the Church has been lamentably forgotten or its nature lamentably distorted. I suppose it was on the whole kept well in view so long as the Church was so unpopular a body that it cost men much to declare themselves Christians. So long the situation of the Church guaranteed the moral seriousness of its members.

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[1] John vii. 17.

[2] See Acts ix. 2—men of *the Way*; xix. 9, 23; xxiv. 22; cf. ii. 28—the ways of life; xvi. 17—the way of salvation; Luke xx. 21—the way of God; John xiv. 6, "I am the Way"; 2 Pet. ii. 21—the way of righteousness.

[3] See Appended Note, p. 803.

But various causes combined to imperil this supremacy of the moral claim. Theological controversy, fascinating and absorbing the Greek intellect, tended to give the Church the appearance of a great society primarily claiming assent to theological propositions, precisely formulated and balanced. Also the new position of the Church as the religion of the Empire brought with it an enormous peril. Henceforth it cost men nothing to profess the Christian name. Nay, after a short interval it cost them very much to profess anything else. Hence the average standard of living in the Church declined with astonishing rapidity. The " standard of the saints " survived in religious houses and elsewhere. But the average moral level of Church membership became deplorably low—" secular and grovelling," as Frederick Denison Maurice called it. And the Church for long ages has acquiesced in this double standard : an ideal for saints and a requirement for men of the world of all classes—a minimum of conformity necessary for salvation. But it is hardly possible to imagine anything more contrary to the moral claim of our Lord than this kind of compromise on the largest scale with the spirit of the world.

Let us recall the scathing estimate of the average moral standard of English churchmen given by William Law in the opening chapters of *The Serious Call*. In particular we discern in the compromise two main surrenders to the spirit of the world : first, that it recognized a distinction between disreputable sins, which are offensive to society, and respectable sins, which must be taken for granted, such as pride, love of money, exclusiveness, and uncharitableness ; whereas in our Lord's eyes the latter are at least as incompatible with the Kingdom of God as fornication or violence. Secondly, it allowed the Christian moral aim to become a process of selfish soul-saving, and abandoned or threw into the shade the claim of brotherhood and the equal spiritual worth of all human souls—the claim of the Kingdom—which was the central motive of original Christianity. Thus the vast organization of modern industrial society grew up—almost without protest from the Church—on a basis which can only be described as frankly anti-Christian, and the accepted relations of nations, in what still called itself Christendom, hardly retained a trace of Christian principle.[1]

The seriousness of this declension in the moral standard and witness of Christendom it is impossible to exaggerate. But I think the situation in the world of to-day gives the Church an opportunity of repentance and constitutes a call of almost unexampled urgency. The tendencies of contemporary thought and feeling are largely anti-Christian ; and the hostility is almost more marked towards the Christian moral standards than towards its theology. On the other hand, a very large number of the best people of all classes are feeling that nothing can save our civilization or their own souls except those very principles of self-control and brotherhood for which Christianity stands. Thus I believe that the most pressing call upon the Church to-day is to remember that its authority and mission rest simply upon the word of God, and that this is first of all the challenge to a new life—a difficult but glorious life. It is called to direct its chief attention to making the Christian doctrine of the Kingdom of God again understood, and summoning men with a fresh understanding to live the life. It will be a very difficult task. But only so can we hope to get men to understand the truth about the authority of the Church; for this doctrinal and sacramental authority is strictly relative to its moral and social mission. And only by giving this the first place in importance does there seem to me to be much hope of restoring the understanding of what the Church is for.

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[1] What is here very briefly sketched is treated at greater length in an "Essex Hall Lecture"—*Christianity Applied to the Life of Men and Nations* (Lindsey Press, 1920).

II

But the " word of the life "—" the life that is life indeed "[1]—with which the Church was entrusted was a message rooted in and depending upon a certain doctrine concerning God and human nature and destiny. Such doctrine is the ground and explanation of the life to be lived, alike in the Old Testament and in the New, as it has been the purpose of the volumes preceding this to show.[2] Nor could it have been otherwise. The rule of life in Buddhism, aiming as it does at an escape from life itself, is quite consistent with positive atheism or indifference to the existence of God. But the whole idea of the Christian life is that of active correspondence with a God, believed in as essentially love, and as having shown His love in the redemption of the world. The life draws its motives and its support from this theological doctrine, and could not subsist if its motives and its support were gone.

And alike in the Old Testament and the New the doctrine concerning God's will and nature is not presented as a conclusion from reasoning, but as a positive revelation and self-disclosure of God—a word of God which commends itself to the conscience of men, but is to be received in faith. There can be no question about that either in the Old Testament or the New. Thus the religion of Christ is in its very essence an authoritative religion based upon the word of God, and the Church is authoritative because it is the commissioned carrier of the message.

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[1] 1 John i. 1; 1 Tim. vi. 19.

[2] See, for instance, *Belief in Christ*, p. 611.

What we have now to do is to look a little more closely at the nature of the authority which the New Covenant claims for its message; and first at our Lord's use of authority.

Certainly our Lord teaches with authority and with the note of infallibility. He certainly regarded men as in a pitiable position if they have not trustworthy spiritual guides. They are as "sheep not having a shepherd," or "blind men led by the blind." And in training the Twelve He is training them to understand and deliver His Gospel—that is assuredly an authoritative message. In our Lord's judgement, mankind cannot do without religious authority to guide and enlighten them. Only the word of God can set them or keep them on the right way.

Also He lays great stress on the childlike temper which knows how to trust and believe. This accounts for His language about the privileged classes—for privilege generally means pride and self-sufficiency. So He saw in wealth an obstacle to belief, and also in learning. They minister to self-sufficiency. And our Lord's religion is to be a religion for common men who feel the burden of life and know their need of help and guidance. This He deliberately makes a matter of thanksgiving. "He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father; for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight." [1]

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[1] Some modern critics who dispute the attribution to our Lord of this saying of Luke x. 21–2, and the addition to it in the parallel

But we must not forget who "the wise and understanding" of our Lord's day and country were. "Woe unto you lawyers!" He said, "for ye took away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."[1] The "wise and understanding" of our Lord's time were in fact bigoted traditionalists. If true learning means openness to the light, whencesoever it comes, certainly they were no learners. And our Lord constantly warns men against moral and intellectual obsession, and insists on the love of the light. We remember that great leaders in science, like Francis Bacon and Pasteur, have loved to insist, like our Lord, on the necessity for the childlike mind, because it is docile and free from obsession; so that we must not misunderstand our Lord's seeming depreciation of learning and wisdom. It is the wisdom of self-sufficiency that is the enemy.

We note that when our Lord argues with opponents and questioners, He shows a singular desire to stimulate thought and enquiry. As has been already remarked, we have several striking examples in His recorded arguments of His seeking to impart no positive teaching, but only to make men feel the obligation of consistency with their own professed principles.[2] And, above all, it would seem that our Lord, as conspicuously as Socrates, though by a different method, was at pains to stimulate thought in common men like the Twelve, such as are without any special education, and believed in their capacity to think freely and truly.

The word of God, which He taught, might indeed

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passage of St. Matthew, are disposed to find the origin of it in Ecclus. li. This is strange. For the supposed author of the saying must have had deep powers of spiritual intuition and would hardly have gathered this depreciation of "wisdom" from a book in praise of wisdom, and the sort of wisdom of which the artisan is incapable (xxxviii. 24—xxxix. 11).

[1] Luke xi. 52.

[2] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 482 ff.

sound at first hearing paradoxical and impracticable; but He seemed to assure men that if they would listen in a candid, open-minded spirit they would "recognize the truth as a friend" by the light that was in them. We cannot imagine our Lord giving a dogmatic lesson about the Trinity or about any subject remote from the conscience and thoughts of His hearers, and forcing it upon their acceptance by a miraculous proof. When, later, the doctrine of the Trinity came to the Church, it came, as we have seen, as something which in the course of their experience had emerged into light. It became evident as a doctrine because it was the interpretation of experience. And in our Lord's teaching the faith on which He makes so profound a claim is not by any means passive acceptance, but the movement of an inward guidance towards the light.

There can be no mistake about this. Though He saw so plainly men's need of religious authority, though His nearest disciples and friends were so spiritually dull, and though He seemed to have in Himself a fount of spiritual knowledge, yet He very rarely uses the dogmatic method of imparting mysteries. People, including His disciples, are constantly asking Him plain questions, and He so rarely gave them plain answers. Sometimes He replies with another question to make them think.[1] He behaves as one who dreads to dwarf or crush the minds of His disciples by dogmatic words, and strives by every means to stimulate and develop their thinking. This is the point of His teaching by proverbs and parables, which express spiritual truth in a challenging and provoking form, never so as to satisfy a questioning spirit. It was characteristic of our Lord that He should have left His disciples to reach their own conclusion as to the secret of His person—

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[1] See Luke xiii. 23, xxi. 7, John xiii. 36, xiv. 5, 22, xvi. 19; and with His adversaries, Luke xx. 2.

"Who say ye that I am?" And if Peter and John are really the authors of the Epistles which bear their names,[1] as the evidence justifies us in believing, they are certainly classical instances of plain men trained to realize the deep things of God, not in the main by dogmatic dictation, but by the leadings of a wonderful experience which a divine Teacher had helped them to interpret.

It must be admitted that there is in the Fourth Gospel more of the dogmatic method than in the Synoptists. There you have more positive and plain disclosures made by our Lord of divine mysteries, as about regeneration, and about Himself as the Christ and as the Bread of Life, and about His pre-existence. I have argued that such disclosures must have been really made in some form by our Lord, if we are to account for the confident beliefs of the Church. But as to the *manner* of our Lord's teaching, I think we cannot doubt that it is more truly represented by the Synoptists than by St. John. Nevertheless, in his Gospel also we find the complaint that He does not teach plainly enough. "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly."[2]

III

We shall find the study of St. Paul's conception and use of authority give us a good deal of illumination. There is no doubt that to him the Church is simply based upon a message of authority, and the apostles and later ministers of the Church are the carriers of it. Thus he writes, "When ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God."[3] We can see a certain change of emphasis in St. Paul's message, as, for instance, about the immediate coming of Christ. But in its main substance there is no evidence of change. He found himself entrusted with a divine message about God the Father, and His only Son, who was incarnate in the fullness of time, Jesus Christ, and lived as man, and died a sacrifice for our sins, and was raised the third day from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and is to come as the final judge in the day of the Lord; and about the Holy Spirit and the Church and the sacraments, and our resurrection. Of all this, and of the moral ideal and standard in which it was to find expression, St. Paul was set in charge. And though he was the first to give the message intellectual consistency, the elements of it were ready to his hand[1]; and, as we have seen, there appears to have been no controversy among the leaders about his interpretation or formulation of the message. This was the authoritative "tradition" or "teaching whereunto men were delivered,"[2] and there was no other.

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[1] I refer to the first Epistles of Peter and John.

[2] John x. 24.

[3] 1 Thess. ii. 13.

Thus there is no room to doubt that for St. Paul the basis of the mission of the Church is a message of divine authority committed to it, and especially to the apostles. There can, again, be no room to doubt his conviction that the apostles, and he among them, were endowed with disciplinary authority as rulers.[3] Also he is convinced that only by such an authoritative message could the spiritual needs of men be met. The " wise men "—Jewish or Greek—might mock at the message ; but St. Paul, like his Master, exults in the triumph of the divine folly over human wisdom. I need not quote the very familiar words. The summary of them is in the thought—" Seeing that in the wise providence of God the world through its philosophy could reach no sufficient knowledge of God, it was God's good pleasure through the preaching that the ' wise men ' mock at to save them that believe." [1]

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[1] Such, I mean, as these: the tradition of the words of the Lord about His divine sonship (see *Belief in Christ*, pp. 382 ff.); the belief in His resurrection, ascension, etc , and in the efficacy of His sacrifice "for our sins"; the belief in the Holy Spirit, in the Church as the New Israel, in the spiritual cleansing and absolution conveyed in baptism, and the gift of the Spirit to the members of the Church conveyed in the laying on of hands; the belief concerning the eucharist conveyed in the formulated tradition; the belief in the apostolic commission and authority; the beliefs about the resurrection of the dead and judgement to come. All these materials and elements of belief were in the Church before St. Paul.

[2] Rom. vi. 17.

[3] See above, p. 688.

Certainly, then, St. Paul would not have us put " the religion of the Spirit " into contrast with " the religions of authority." The primary work of the Spirit had been to inspire men to speak the word of God, and the word of God had reached finality in Jesus Christ. The religion of the Spirit was based upon this authoritative message. Moreover, the religion of the Spirit was membership in a society which had authoritative rulers. Both in matters of doctrine and in matters of conduct St. Paul would have the members of the Church recognize that they are under authority. Where he sees wilfulness and individualism, such as would break up the common life, he speaks very sharply. " We have no such custom, neither the churches of God." " What ? was it from you that the word of God went forth ? or came it unto you alone ? " When he sees grave sin, such as would annul the moral witness of the Church, he makes an uncompromising demand for the excommunication of the offender. " Put away from among yourselves the wicked person." Nay, he himself intervenes to do it in the name of Christ.[2] The examples shown us of the exercise of discipline are chiefly in cases of moral conduct and church practice. But where St. Paul detects a new teaching which is fundamentally destructive, as in the case of the Galatian Judaizers, he speaks with a like sharpness and decision. "Though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any Gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema."[1] St. Paul, then, is a strong authoritarian, and the "spirit of discipline" in the Pastoral Epistles is certainly no good argument against St. Paul's authorship. Nevertheless this is only half the truth.

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[1] 1 Cor. i. 21.

[2] 1 Cor. xi. 16, xiv. 36, and v. 13.

1. To St. Paul, authoritative action is tolerable only at the last resort. He has a dread of legislation and what he calls "dogmas," that is, ordinances.[2] He would have the life in the Spirit show itself in free and loving obedience without external regulation. He dreads ordinances as leading to legalism.[3] He is also very tolerant of minor differences among Christians. One has his mind in this way and another in that. "Let each man be fully persuaded in his own mind," and let the Church learn to tolerate differences in matters which are not vital. "Receive ye one another [with all your differences], as Christ also received you."[4]

2. Moreover he is far from suggesting an opposition between faith and the free exercise of reason. There is a wisdom of the world, indeed, which stumbles at the doctrine of the Cross and can only come to naught. But when once the soul is grounded in the faith in Jesus Christ he would have it in all cases grow up into a full rational understanding. "We received . . . the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God." "In mind be ye grown-up men."[5] Like his Master, St. Paul has the greatest respect for the average man's intelligence if he is spiritually minded.

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[1] Gal. i. 8–9.
[2] Col. ii. 16–23.
[3] Gal. v. 1.
[4] Rom. xiv. 5–xv. 7.
[5] 1 Cor. ii. 12, xiv. 20.

Nothing can be further from his mind than to praise the passive acceptance of dogma. "Quench not the spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things."[1] His Epistles are full of a generous attempt to make every convert in the churches of his foundation understand the mind of God and the meaning of his religion. "Teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ," i.e. full-grown or fully initiated. He would have a joyous sense of freedom in the truth possess the Church, and not a breath of obscurantism could blow from his quarter. "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man."[2]

3. He is always anxious to represent the whole body of the Church, and not only its officers, as the organ of the Spirit. It is misleading to describe the Church as St. Paul represents it as a democracy, because it is much more manifestly a theocracy.[3] It looks up for its authority to Christ and the Spirit, and it has a positive revelation which controls it. But it is true that the early churches cultivated a democratic spirit, under St. Paul's guidance. At the last resort he claims authority to declare the Gospel, and to excommunicate a scandalous moral offender, apparently even if the church will not do so for itself. But he uses all his efforts to carry the churches with him theologically, and to get all the members of the church to act together in excommunicating and in absolving.[4] He can write epistles to pastors, but almost all his correspondence is with churches. All

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[1] 1 Thess. v. 19 ff.

[2] Col. i. 28, cf. ver. 9; Phil. i. 9; Eph. i. 17 ff; 1 Cor. ii. 45.

[3] I do not say that a democracy might not be this. But if it were to believe that God had given it a divine law for its action and a divine revelation for its political guidance, it would cease to be a democracy in the ordinary sense, like the Puritan colonies in New England (see the history of *The Founding of New England*, by Truslow Adams). I mean by a democracy a society of men who believe that they have to find their way by consulting the general will and following it.

[4] So we should gather from 1 Cor. v., 2 Cor. ii. 8–11.

are to participate in the theology and in the discipline of the society; and he cultivates the representative spirit (see 1 Cor. xvi. 3–4, 2 Cor. viii. 19). And in the next generation this democratic spirit is seen in Clement's Epistle and downwards through Cyprian, though in a diminishing degree—preserved, however, in a measure in the right of the people to elect their bishops.[1]

An examination of St. John's Epistles would lead to very much the same conclusions as we have reached about St. Paul. He, too, views the Church as existing to maintain a once-for-all given standard of truth, which centres in the doctrine of the incarnation. There can be no toleration of any false teaching which contradicts this. "Let that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning. If that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father."[2] "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any man cometh unto you, and bringeth not the teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works."[3] The false teaching alluded to is apparently an early form of Gnosticism, preached by Cerinthus, which was a substantial denial of the real incarnation. What is enjoined by St. John is practical excommunication, which would no doubt have become formal. But St. John's ideal of authority, like St. Paul's, would have it encourage and guide, not suppress, active intelligence and spiritual independence. "Ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things. . . . The anointing which ye received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you."[1]

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[1] See Rackham's essay "Position of the Laity in the Early Church," in *Reform in the Church of England* (Murray).

[2] 1 John ii. 24.

[3] 2 John 9.

Both St. John and St. Paul appear to have a robust confidence that the good man—the spiritual man—will come to a right conclusion. They do not seem to be vexed with our problem, that so many good and spiritual men, as we must judge them to be, come to what we must also judge to be the wrong conclusion.[2] They seem to assume that genuine goodness and acceptance of the truth even in this world will be found together. On the whole, we may suppose that, under our different circumstances, they would have said that good men who cannot believe, but find themselves bound to engage in active teaching of what contradicts the faith, must indeed pass out of the communion of the Church; but while in this sense the Church judges them, beyond this it must leave them to the judgement of God, who alone can make known the counsels of the heart, and who, we know, condemns only the proud will and the mind and works of darkness.

IV

When we pass out of the apostolic age into the age of the Fathers we find no change in the view of authority. The Church exists to exhibit a life and to maintain a tradition of doctrine on which the life depends. The tradition is what has been held from the beginning. The content of the tradition as given us by Origen and as implied in Irenaeus is substantially the same. It is of obligation upon all Christians to accept it. "That alone is to be believed as truth which disagrees in nothing from the ecclesiastical and apostolical tradition"; but those who have the special gifts of wisdom and knowledge must seek to understand the reason of the things believed, the "how" and the "why."[1]

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[1] 1 John ii. 20, 27.

[2] See Dr. Pollock (Bishop of Norwich), *Good Men without Faith* (S.P.C.K.).

This "tradition" of course existed long before the canonization of the books of the New Testament ; but, when that canonization took place, it seems to have been universally taken for granted that, while the tradition was needed to interpret the Scriptures, they, on the other hand, supplied the standard by which the doctrinal authority of the Church was limited, and by which its action was to be judged. The tradition was to be found in the Scriptures in its most authoritative form ; and the principle of the Church of England, that "whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation," would, as far as we can judge, have commanded the cordial assent of the Fathers. Thus while in matters of discipline the Church could act freely, and give injunctions of binding force, as circumstances required, on its own authority, in matters of faith it could do nothing except declare and defend what had been held from the beginning. This is an exceedingly important principle, and it is the best safeguard against the tyranny of authority.

St. Athanasius states the matter very plainly in speaking about the Council of Nicaea, noting the difference in the formula used by the Council when settling the Paschal controversy and that used by them with regard to the question of faith. "With reference to Easter," he says, "such and such things were determined, and at such a date, for at that time it was determined that all should obey a certain rule ; but with reference to the faith they wrote not 'such and such things were determined,' but 'thus the Catholic Church believes.' And they added immediately the statement of their faith, to show that their judgement was not new but apostolic, and that what they wrote was not any discovery of theirs, but was what the apostles taught." Elsewhere he insists that "in the Holy Scriptures alone is the instruction of religion announced—to which let no man add, from which let no man detract—which are sufficient in themselves for the enunciation of the truth." He also would have us recognize that a "point of view" is necessary in reading and interpreting Scripture, and this point of view should be the mind of the Church. But he would not have demurred to his contemporary, Cyril of Jerusalem, saying to his catechumens, "Do not believe me simply, unless you receive from Holy Scripture the proof of what I say"; "Keep that faith only which the Church is now giving you, and which is certificated out of the whole of Scripture."[1]

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[1] Origen, *de Princip.*, lib. i, Praef. 2, 3.

In a previous volume I have given reasons for thinking that the doctrinal definitions of the ecumenical councils were really justified by the necessities of defending the faith as St. Paul and

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[1] Athan., *de Synodis* 5, *adv. Gentes* init., and *Fragm. Fest. Ep.* xxxix; Cyril, *Catech.*, iv, 17, 33, v, 12. I have given other quotations and references in *Roman Catholic Claims*, chaps. iii and iv (Longmans). Dr. Mason says: "I do not know of one article of belief which is asserted by the Fathers to be derived from tradition outside of the canon of Scripture." I have never seen even one passage in any of the Fathers which contradicts this. There is a passage in St. Basil, *de Spir. Sanct.*, cap. xxvii, § 66, which looks as if it were going to; but when he comes to specify the "dogmata" which are derived from unwritten tradition, they are all *customs* or ritual forms—signing the cross, turning to the east, ceremonies of baptism, the form of the Creed. And as to matters of faith he makes the usual statement in *de Fide*, c. 1. "It is a manifest falling from the faith, and a proof of arrogancy, either to reject any of those things that are written, or to bring in any of those things that are not written." There is a passage in St. Chrysostom's *Hom.* iv in 2 Thess. (on 2 Thess. ii. 2) in which he says tradition is enough without Scripture. But it is a very brief passage which demands elucidation. And it is elucidated in *Hom.* v (on 2 Thess. iii. 6) in the usual sense of the Fathers: see G. L. Prestige on *Tradition* in *Theology* for July 1926.

St. John expounded it.[1] And something more will be said about this when we come to speak about the development of doctrine; but we should notice that, at least in the beginning, the Church cannot be charged with any love of dogmatizing. They believed that their duty of maintaining the ground of faith forced them to frame these conciliar definitions. Knowing all that we know about the blessing which the dogmatic formulas have proved, we may be loath to call them "necessary evils"; but that phrase does not misrepresent the mind of the fourth-century Church towards them. And the theologians accepted very gladly the limitation on the action of authority involved in the appeal to Scripture. Indeed it is most noticeable how little in days of very sharp controversy the Fathers refer to the then recent dogmatic decisions, as if they of themselves sufficed to settle the matter and no more need be said. Athanasius in particular in his voluminous writings about Arianism rarely mentions the action of the Council of Nicaea. All his argument is out of Scripture; and the same may be said for most of the Fathers. Their canons of interpreting Scripture are not indeed always ours, and their arguments on particular texts we often cannot accept. But on the whole, I contend, they were profoundly right. The Arian, or the Apollinarian, or the "Nestorian," or the Monophysite Christ is certainly not the Christ of the New Testament; and the Christ of the Nicene Creed is. And no one who recognizes how often the tendency of theological feeling and speculation inside the Church lay in a Monophysite direction, or at least in the direction of explaining away our Lord's real humanity, can fail to feel that the balancing and impartial action of the Councils, putting equal emphasis on the complete reality of both His Godhead and His manhood, suggests, in spite of all the human infirmities which the history of the Councils shows in painful evidence, a real action of the Holy Spirit guiding the common mind of the Church.

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[1] *Belief in Christ*, pp. 513–18.

The authority of the Church, then, was conceived of as a strictly limited authority; and as in the New Testament, it is an authority which seeks to stimulate and guide, not to drug or to suppress the judgement of the mass of churchmen. No doubt the victory of orthodoxy, as it came to be accepted, was due in great part to the insight of individual theologians and bishops, like St. Athanasius and St. Cyril and St. Leo. But the action of the mass of the bishops at least in the East was so vacillating and uncertain through long years of controversy, that it was truly remarked that the victory was won over the bishops by the steadfastness of the laity. And certainly the theologians and preachers of the fourth century did their best to make them understand the nature of the issue. They show the same robust faith as St. Paul and St. John in the capacity of the ordinary man for the understanding of his creed. Their popular sermons as well as their theological writings are one long appeal to reason and to Scripture, while even the mention of the authority of the dogmatic decisions is rare. Certainly they regard it as the function of authority to stimulate enquiry, and not suppress it.

One other point deserves notice. The man of an enquiring mind would have found in the early Church a very liberal temper of toleration. From time to time an overbold spirit backed by a strenuous will might promulgate some theory which was felt to be so destructive of the foundations of the Christian faith that the Church was called upon to condemn it as heretical. And certainly the opinions condemned as heresies were very capital heresies. But meanwhile the school of Alexandria in the third century was producing a type of theology very different in tone from that of the Africans; and the difference of tone showed itself in opinions surprisingly different—for instance, about the destiny of the lost, or the meaning of the body of Christ in the eucharist. Later, Alexandria and Antioch and Africa and Rome nourished very distinctive types of doctrine among theologians who were pillars of orthodoxy, and differences of opinion are sometimes marked. We notice that Jerome and Augustine, of whom we should not have expected it, frankly approve such tolerance of differences. Thus they recall an occasion, very well known in history, when Rome, represented by Stephen, its bishop, affirmed the validity of baptism administered by heretics, while Africa, headed by Cyprian, with other churches, vehemently denied it; but while Rome would have excommunicated those who held and acted upon the latter opinion, Cyprian and his friends declined to contemplate any such course. They demanded toleration—*salvo jure communionis diversa sentire.* And, though this involved on their side the acceptance as members of the Christian Church of persons who, in their theory, had never really been baptized, still Cyprian was ready to insist on mutual respect between rival traditions. And Jerome and Augustine recall all this "perseverantissima tolerantia" with emphatic commendation. "All these," writes Augustine, "Catholic unity embraces in her motherly breast, bearing each others' burdens in turn, and endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, until the Lord should reveal to one or the other of them, if in any point they think otherwise than as they should."[1] Thus I say the lover of freedom in the Church of the first four centuries, though he would have found certain broad limits laid down, in passing beyond which he would pass out of the communion of the Church, would have been left with plenty of room to move within those limits and no prevailing desire to curtail his liberty.

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[1] For Cyprian, see *Dict. of Christ. Biog.*, where quotations are collected. For Augustine, see *de Bapt.*, ii, 3–6. For Jerome, *adv. Lucif.*, 25. The matter is treated at rather greater length in *Roman Catholic Claims*, chap. viii, pp. 134 f.

No doubt there was another note heard from time to time which was destined to prevail especially in the West. Thus while Origen would find in the tradition a stimulus to free enquiry, Tertullian lays it down that belief in Christ and acceptance of the Gospel brings curiosity and enquiry to an end. "All the delay of seeking and finding thou hast terminated by believing."[1] The enquiring mind is apparently to be quenched. Belief should exclude enquiry. Two centuries later, when papal authority was rapidly developing, we find Innocent I, occupied with the case of Pelagius, speaking of the "secret treasury" (*arcana*) of divine truth, which apparently renders the Roman pontiff an oracle from which other bishops must receive decisions as certainly divine.[2] Here is a conception of a central shrine of divine truth which can act rapidly to determine controversies—in startling contrast to the notion of a diffused tradition which must be collected from all the churches; and can only laboriously find full expression by the cumbrous machinery of a General Council; and must then wait for the general reception of the Council before its title to ecumenical authority can be recognized; and must further be prepared to stand the challenge of an appeal to Scripture. Here is a contrast suggested, pregnant with very important consequences, and calculated to raise the question whether the authority provided by Christ for His Church is a rapid and peremptory authority, a living voice of God, capable of perpetual disclosures and decisions, or the slow-moving authority of a diffused corporate witness to a voice once uttered, living indeed in power and application, but in substance final and never to be repeated. And, once more, half a century later, we find Leo the Great asserting that "the faith which is one and simple does not admit of variety"—the sort of utterance which represents a passion for uniformity, as thorough as possible. Such utterances, though they tend to different points, are alike one another in expressing a spirit which was to fashion an ideal of authority widely different from that which we have been considering. It is the Romanist and especially the Jesuit ideal. And we must proceed to consider it. On the other hand, we shall have also to take account of the ideal of authority which, by reaction from Rome, established itself as Protestant orthodoxy, showing itself sometimes in a form as autocratic and absolute as papalism, but grounding its authority on the Bible and the Bible only, and making Christianity the religion of the book. These developments will occupy us in the next three chapters. But we must pause, before going forward, to summarize the kind of conclusion about the nature of the authority of the Church which we have gathered from the New Testament and the records of the early centuries of the Church's life, especially under the influence of the Greek Fathers.

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[1] *De Praescr.*, cc. 7–10.

[2] *Ep.* xxx, *ad Numid.*, *P.L.*, xx, 582 ff. In the Breviary, lesson vi for the festival of the Immaculate Conception, the dogma is said to have been proclaimed by Pius IX, "supremo suo et infallibili oraculo."

First, then, we found that the Church inherited from the prophets and from the Lord the sense that true religion is a life to be lived. The stress is on "the way"—the way of holiness and brotherhood. And there is nothing secret about it. It is to be lived in the eyes of men, and it is by the witness of the life that men are to be won for the truth. So the Lord had said, "Ye are the salt of the earth. . . .

Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. . . . Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Dr. Brightman [1] has recently given us a singularly careful account of the instruction given to catechumens in the early centuries of the Church and of the moral discipline into which they were initiated. The required abstinence from idolatry, from bloodshedding, and from fornication closed to the Christian many professions, and when he was admitted to instruction he was not left in any doubt as to the meaning of 'the way.' And so long as professing the Christian name was a dangerous adventure, there is no doubt that our Lord's great words about the function of the Church were on the whole richly fulfilled. The salt did not lose its savour. As has been said already, the meaning of Church authority in doctrinal matters can never be understood till it is the life and not the doctrine which is put into the first place.

2. But the life is based upon a word or message of God; and the message declares not only the life which is to be lived, but also the reasons for living it. It is a message about God and His redemptive acts, and about the nature and destiny of man, and about the divine provision made for realizing the good life. And all this has come to men not as a conclusion of their own reasoning, but as a revelation from God—a divine self-disclosure; and of this authoritative message or word of God the Church is set in charge; and the convert won to the Church and desiring to live "the life which is life indeed" must accept the message in childlike faith, not as the word of men but as the word of God—on authority.

3. But authority is of many different kinds.

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[1] See his essay on "Terms of Communion" in *The Early History of the Church and Ministry,*" pp. 320 ff.

There is the authority of the despot which seeks to subdue and to crush ; and there is the authority of a parent which seeks to quicken and to educate. And the authority of the Church should be of the latter kind. We took note how the infallible Master was exceedingly reserved in dogmatic teaching. He did indeed ask for whole-hearted self-devotion and faith in Himself and His word, and He could take for granted the faith of the Jew in the true God and in human destiny. But for the rest He plainly meant His disciples to learn for themselves from their experience of Him and to catch the truth from hints and parables. He certainly was not a teacher who thought that the best way for men was to have a plain statement of truth dictated to them on authority and a plain answer given to their questions.

Circumstances were changed after His death and resurrection and the coming of the Spirit. Thenceforth the Name of God has become the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ; and the incarnation of the Son and His sacrificial death and His glory and future coming, and the ministry of the Spirit in the Church, and the purpose of the sacraments—all this, as the background of " the word of life," constituted the Gospel which the Church was to deliver. It was the word of God ; and though, it may be, the only profession at first asked of the converts was the profession that " Jesus is Lord," yet in fact we find that St. Paul presupposes a full acquaintance with the Gospel in those he writes to. They had all been instructed in these articles of the faith. And St. Paul is fully conscious that this faith must be maintained, and at the last resort he is ready to say of anyone who would undermine it, " Let him be anathema " ; nevertheless, as we have seen, with St. Paul too the main stress is on the life to be lived, and on the faith which surrenders itself to God in Christ, and on reliance in the power and

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guidance of the Spirit. His conception of authority plainly disposes him to encourage liberty and to make light of differences which do not break the fellowship or undermine the faith. And he means belief to grow into understanding ; and he seeks the co-operation of all the members of the Church in the fulfilment of a common vocation. He would have authority quicken and stimulate thought and liberate action ; and he is afraid of "ordinances" as tending to legalism.

And we caught the note of the same spirit in the early Church, especially under the influence of the Greek Fathers. They conceive of the doctrinal authority of the Church as a restricted thing—restricted by Scripture. If it has to lay down dogmatic limits, they must be justified by the necessity for defending the central faith. And their Church was a broad Church which tolerated many differences of minor belief and varieties of practice. And intellectually life in the Church was a highly stimulating atmosphere in which enquiry was not quenched and there was plenty of room to move. So it was down at least to the fifth century. The Church says to the convert, You must accept the message as the word of God on faith ; but your faith should grow into understanding. It will make you intellectually as well as morally free.

If this be the true method, it has two enemies. The first is the temper which treats all acceptance of truth on authority as degrading ; and in particular appears to deprecate in religion the very idea of a divine word to be received in faith—a divine message such as can be expressed in true propositions and embodied in historic facts. It would apparently interpret intellectual liberty to mean that each man must start for himself to discover what he can about God and human destiny. No doubt the excessive dogmatism of the Church, especially at certain periods, has stimulated such a temper by reaction. But if Christianity is to mean anything at all resembling what it meant at the beginning and has meant in history, it must be rooted and grounded in the recognition of a word of God to be received in faith by all alike with the trustfulness of a child. Knowing what we know about the eccentricity of the human mind, we know that only the recognition of the authority of revelation could have generated a coherent Church.

And the principle of authority must be recognized as lying at the root of all stable human progress. Plato and Hegel may over-emphasize authority and underrate initiative. But they are great masters of education. They are surely right in recognizing that there is a heritage of truth, theoretical and practical, which each generation of children must begin by accepting in faith. Reverence, as Goethe was fond of pointing out, is the first quality requisite for learning. The power of mental initiative, the power of original contribution, which each individual has in him and which it is the function of education to liberate, is strengthened, not weakened, by reverent docility at the start. Hegel was right, I think, in saying to his youthful students that they would injure their capacity for original thinking by premature criticism. In the world of religion in our day it is both ludicrous and lamentable to see how men and women go utterly astray because they give themselves freely to the criticism of religion without any serious attempt to ascertain what, in its best form and as a coherent whole, that religion means. The first requisite is concentration of mind to receive and appreciate and use. The most fruitful criticism is based upon the sympathetic understanding which can only come from within the faith.

Nevertheless, the best evidence that the message of the Church is really the word of God lies in its being able to liberate and satisfy the reason which is God's original gift to man.

Thus the other enemy of true authority is that conception of it which identifies it with absolutism and faith with passive acceptance, which would find the essential mark of authority in its peremptoriness and declare that faith is the enemy and not the mother of free enquiry and criticism. And it is to this kind of authoritarianism that we must now turn our attention.

APPENDED NOTE (see p. 778)

THE TEACHING OF THE EPISTLES PRIMARILY MORAL

No one could doubt this in the case of the Epistles of Peter and James; nor in those of St. John, though he insists on the coherence of character and creed. We constantly are exhorted to strenuousness in defending the Creed by the words of St. Jude, " Exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints "; but we have to notice that the contents of his epistle would lead us to believe that the internal foes whom he summons men to resist are enemies of Christian moral principle, rather than devisers of new doctrine. And I think it is true to say that St. Paul's strenuousness in maintaining doctrine is always conditioned very definitely by its bearing on the life of the Church, social and individual. There is very little speculative interest in theology to be found in St. Paul. He is quite content to recognize that intellectually we " know in part," " we see but in a mirror or a riddle "; but we know enough for the practical needs of the life to be lived. The life is the primary aim of the Gospel. To recognize this is not to depreciate dogma, but to appreciate it.

CHAPTER VI

AUTHORITY IN ROMAN THEORY

We have been looking attentively at the idea of authority as we find it in the Church of the early centuries, and especially in that part of it which spoke Greek; and we have noted especially two of its characteristics. First, that it is a strictly limited authority, limited especially by the appeal to Scripture—nothing, it appears, is to be promulgated either in substance contrary to or beyond " what is written." Secondly, that authority was not thought of as suppressing enquiry, but as encouraging it, even within the region of its own decisions. The appeal is constantly to the " open Bible " and to reason.

But no one can take a general survey of Church history without becoming conscious that a very much more unrestricted and peremptory conception of authority has become prevalent, particularly within the wide scope of the Roman communion, and still more particularly under the influence of the society which since the beginning of the Counter-Reformation has so largely moulded the Roman Church—the Society of Jesus. It is to this idea of authority that we must now pay attention.

Those who maintain this conception would not, I suppose, demur to our putting forward the life to be lived as the primary purpose of the dogmatic message, though in fact they have tended to present the life as a matter of individual conduct to be rewarded with salvation in another world, to an extent which seriously distorts the original Christian idea of " the life" and the "way"; but they would contend that the more absolute the dogmatic law—the more completely it is placed aloft beyond criticism or discussion—the more easily and quickly can the individual devote himself to the practical saving of his soul. I do not want to forget this argument. I know how much it impresses many in our generation, wearied with constant discussions and contradictions in the world of contemporary religion. I remember how much one in the last generation whom many of us regarded with great veneration—Richard Holt Hutton, of *The Spectator*—used to feel it. He could not accept the Roman claim. Yet he used to press upon us Anglicans his sense that no type of religion was so successful as the Roman in providing a steadfast and tranquil background for the spiritual life. And we have read lately a good many lives of Frenchmen of intellectual distinction—Charles de Foucauld was only the last of many—who have passed almost at a bound from intellectual and moral licence to a totally uncritical acceptance of Roman authority in its extremest form, and therein found their peace.[1]

I

With this plea in mind, then, let us understand the idea. Briefly, it is that one who is outside the Church, and is yet conscious of its attraction, should exercise his free and critical judgement upon its claim until he is convinced of its divine mission, but that free enquiry is only legitimate up to the threshold of faith. The basis of faith once gained and the act of faith once made, reason, in the sense of the critical judgement, must, within the sphere of what is of faith, abdicate. You cannot criticize God's word without impiety! And while this abdication is required of any person converted from outside from the moment of his conversion,[1] one brought up in the faith should throughout maintain this critically passive attitude of mind. For the dogma of the Church entrusted to the hierarchy is God's word. The hierarchy is the *ecclesia docens*. And the attitude of the body of the faithful, the *ecclesia discens*, must be that of unquestioning acceptance. The famous rule of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, "To make sure of being right in all things, we ought always to hold by the principle that the white which I see I would believe to be black if the hierarchical Church were so to rule it "[2]—was seriously framed and must be taken seriously.

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[1] I return to this plea for the spiritual value of absolutism below, pp. 845 ff.

I hope and I suppose that there are many Roman Catholics who would not assent to this idea of faith as blindly submissive. Indeed, the principle of which I have quoted an expression from Father Woodlock is opposed to that of the great Schoolmen, as I shall seek to indicate. But it appears to be the prevalent principle in the Roman communion to-day. It is the same principle which lies behind the familiar Roman Catholic statement that all declared articles of faith present the same claim of certainty, and that "the infallibility of the Pope and the Godhead of Christ rest exactly on the same authority."[3] The same proposition would of course

[1] Cf. Fr. Woodlock, S.J., *Constantinople, Canterbury, and Rome*, p. 3 (Longmans): "The Catholic theory of the use of the reason in religion is this. A man uses his reason, his private judgement, to reach the Church as the mouthpiece of God's message. Once that is found, he uses his reason, not to criticize and reject, but to understand and assimilate what doctrinal authority proposes to him as God's truth."

[2] I have taken the translation from Father Rickaby's most useful edition of the *Spiritual Exercises*, p. 223 (Burns & Oates).

[3] I am glad to read the Rev. Father Al. Janssens' criticism of this statement, quoted in Viscount Halifax's *Further Considerations*, p. 58 (Mowbray). But it is certainly commonly made by Roman divines in England.

be maintained about the immaculate conception of Mary and the resurrection of our Lord. It means that the basis of faith is the absolute authority of the Church, irrespective of every appeal to the evidence of history or of tradition. I will cite a popular statement recently reported from a Roman Catholic mission in Birmingham as an instance of this claim of *absolute* authority:

> "The Roman Catholic Church claimed absolute exclusive truth; she dared to say that all the others were wrong. Did the Catholic or the Protestant Churches make the truth quite clear? The Protestant Churches obviously did not. . . . Three hundred millions, people of every nation, would affirm that the Catholic Church made the truth quite clear. They would say, 'Our Holy Mother, the Catholic Church, by the living voice of St. Peter and his successors, gifted with infallible utterance by Christ Himself, speaks clearly to each of us the absolute truth of God. That living voice never wavers, never quibbles, never hesitates. It cannot; for it is the voice of the God of Absolute Truth, speaking through His chosen instrument, the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.'"[1]

I quote this popular statement because it strikes the sort of note with which we are made familiar in England.

Now, how do we stand in face of this claim that we must regard the teaching authority of the Church as peremptory and without appeal, and in face of the plea that this sort of authority best suits human nature? We have recognized to the full that the religion of Christ is for all men and not specially for learned men; and certainly the mass of men have neither the leisure nor the knowledge requisite for submitting the teaching of the Church to critical and historical verification. If they too can pass from simply accepting the faith on authority to personal conviction, it must be in the main by a process of moral verification—verification in life and spiritual experience. But the gift of "wisdom" and the gift of "knowledge" are among the gifts of the Spirit of God, as well as the gift of "faith."[1] They constitute the vocation of the scholar—and that must be recognized in the Church, not for his own sake only, but for the sake of the whole body.

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[1] A statement by the Rev. Owen Francis Dudley, "of the Roman Catholic Missionary Society," quoted from a Birmingham evening paper of November 5, 1923.

Surely nothing is more certain in history generally, and in Church history in particular, than that every tradition, entrusted to an authoritative body, tends, if left to itself, to deteriorate under the pressure of popular demands and for lack of self-criticism in the teaching body. So the authoritative teaching in Israel had deteriorated when our Lord came on earth. And as has been noted, there is no reason to believe that the Church of the New Covenant was exempted from this peril any more than the Church of the Old. It had no divine guarantee given to it which can be interpreted as meaning that it could neglect the means of self-enlightenment and still be secure against mistake.[2] What is needed is the free action within the body of the Church of the spirit of wisdom and the spirit of knowledge; and to secure that is the vocation of the scholar.

And the vocation of a scholar requires that he should think freely. It is mocking him to tell him to investigate and form judgements of truth, and at the same time to dictate to him what those judgements are to be. He must be free to go where the argument, duly weighed, leads him. It is all the better that he should be saturated from his childhood upwards in the Church tradition, or, if not that,

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

[2] See Appended Note A on the Infallibility of the Church, p. 825.

should at least have had time to learn by experience within the Church the meaning of its creed and worship and sacraments. It is only from within, or by a rare gift of sympathy from without, that the real meaning of any institution or tradition can be learned. The devout Catholic need be no more prejudiced, in the false sense, than the rationalist. But he must be prepared to receive light from every quarter, however hostile, and to follow the light. He must not "reason in fetters." The test of the truth of the tradition is that it can bear the whole light. If his thought leads him plainly and finally outside the Christian Creed, of course he must cease to hold the office of a Church teacher. Freedom for thinking has no connexion with freedom to violate one's engagements. He must no doubt take the risk of such an event. Anyway, the Church must sanction free enquiry—praying earnestly for its scholars that their faith fail not. If such freedom is refused inside the Church, it will assert itself outside; and that way lies revolution or schism.

In the days of the Fathers, from Origen to Augustine, the world of intellect was dominated in the main by a phase of Platonic philosophy. And into this world of philosophy the leaders of Christian thought advanced with bold freedom, and, on the whole, successfully established a synthesis between the tradition and the higher thought of their age. When in the dawn of the Renaissance[1] a revived Aristotelianism seemed so threatening to faith that there were those who, like the great St. Bernard, denounced the new logic as impious, nevertheless the liberty of reason asserted itself again, and a new synthesis established itself of which St. Thomas Aquinas was the master-builder.

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[1] In the really dark age—which intervened between the age of the Fathers, when the spirit of Greek philosophy still lived on, and the intellectual renaissance of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—there is a tendency, alien to what is to be found in the Fathers, to regard the intellect with something more than suspicion. Thus in the controversy with Berengar the belief in transubstantiation, not yet modified by the Schoolmen, is glorified for its irrationality. The more the faith violates the testimony of the senses, the more merit it has. See *Dissert.*, p. 260.

There were differences between the positions maintained by different founders of scholasticism. St. Anselm, for example, following Scotus Erigena, seems to claim that everything that is believed on authority can be established on an independent basis by the reason. He gives this full interpretation to *Credo ut intelligam.* But St. Thomas is much more cautious.[1] He recognizes that reason cannot demonstrate (for example) the truth that God is the absolute Creator or the truth of Trinity in Unity; but reason can show the necessity for God's self-revelation, and recognize its reality; and while revelation must needs cover the ground of reason and transcend it, it must not contradict it; nay, more, reason should find within its own materials intimations, at least, of what is revealed. Thus revelation must satisfy reason.[2] There were then differences between the founders of scholasticism. But all were agreed upon the position that the dogma of the Church was not an obstruction to the free action of the reason, but a stimulus to it, and that revealed truth cannot be contrary to the conclusions of reason.

But neither the Fathers nor the Schoolmen had to face an intellectual world in which empirical science and historical criticism had become the dominant factors. The great St. Thomas, for example, in his treatment of his authorities is utterly uncritical. He appears to have no sense of what historical criticism means.[1] And to bring the faith to be at home in our modern intellectual world may be a harder task even than that set to Fathers and Schoolmen. Nevertheless, it is the task that is set us, if we believe the faith to be the truth. And there is no way to effect a new synthesis of faith and knowledge except by thought and examination which are both Christian and free. And this is for the sake of all. Not only is it the only way to avoid, or to recover from, a disastrous divorce between religion and knowledge; but it is also needed for the sake of the average man and woman. Half the attendants at our churches to-day are enfeebled in the spiritual life because they entertain a suspicion that what they hear from the pulpit is not true and will not bear sifting. Nothing will remove this pressing uneasiness except the widely spread conviction that the scholars of the Church are facing the light and the Church is eager to learn from them. We must refuse, then, any conception of faith such as would restrict or lay in fetters the free thought of its scholars.

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[1] See the admirable work of Dr. Philip Wicksteed, *Reactions between Dogma and Philosophy,* illustrated from the works of St. Thomas Aq., capp. i, ii (Williams & Norgate, 1920).

[2] See Appended Note, p. 954, on the Rationality of the Christian Belief in God.

There is also another consideration which it is important to have in view. Part of the teaching of the Roman Church is pronounced to be *de fide*. It is infallibly defined. Such, for example, are, I believe, the dogmas of the immaculate conception of Mary and the infallibility of the Pope, and transubstantiation. All these dogmas present peculiar and, as it seems to me, insuperable difficulties to the historical student. He is accustomed in the Creed to find facts of history propounded as articles of faith—the virginal conception, and death and resurrection and ascension of Christ. But in the New Testament these facts are very studiously and insistently presented as guaranteed by sufficient testimony of competent witnesses. This is apparent in the preface to St. Luke's Gospel, and the statement of requisites for the office of the Twelve (Acts i. 21, 22), and St. Paul's statement concerning the evidence of the appearances of the risen Christ. There is nothing propounded to be believed as a fact of history except on adequate testimony. And who, one asks, can resist the testimony to our Lord's resurrection, except under the influence of that sort of rationalism which refuses the miraculous *a priori*? But here in the doctrine of the immaculate conception of Mary there is propounded to be believed as a fact by the faithful, with exactly the same confidence as the resurrection of Christ, something which has no shadow of historical evidence, which was demonstrably not an element in the tradition of the Church from the beginning, which was repudiated when it came into notice by many of the greatest mediaeval saints and theologians, and which is only supported by the sort of logic which all historians know to be utterly untrustworthy, that is, *a priori* argument as to what must have happened or ought to have happened. We should indeed think and speak of the Blessed Virgin with a profound reverence and devotion; but to put the immaculate conception of Mary[1] side by side with the resurrection of Christ, as entitled to an identical faith as a fact, is to remove the act of faith altogether from its standing-ground in historical testimony.

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[1] It is interesting to note that when a certain *catena* of passages from the Greek Fathers, intended to convince the Greeks that they ought to submit to Rome, came into the hands of Urban IV, he submitted it to St. Thomas Aquinas. Among the passages quoted many—supposed to be from St. Chrysostom, St. Cyril, etc.—were, as all now admit, forgeries. Now Thomas was acute enough in detecting certain theological inaccuracies in some of these passages, but he was quite without the spirit of historical criticism, which would have caused him, as it caused the scholars of the Renaissance, at once to detect that the supposed testimonies to the papal monarchy were glaring forgeries. So St. Thomas incorporated these forgeries into the structure of his defence of the papal claim, and they remained there to deceive students down to Sir Thomas More. See *The Pope and the Council*, by Janus, pp. 264 f., and Denny, *Papalism*, pp. 114 ff.

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[1] The corporal assumption of Mary is, I believe, not "of faith" in the Roman communion, but it is celebrated as a "Double of the First Class," with the same liturgical honours as the commemorations of the birth and ascension of Christ.

The historical difficulty which attaches to the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope is well known. It appears to conflict with some certain facts of history; as, even more certainly, does the affirmation which accompanies it, that in asserting the dogma the Vatican Council was only "faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the first beginnings of the Christian faith."[1]

The dogma of transubstantiation is also involved not only in metaphysical but in historical difficulties, because it conflicts with an important current of Church tradition which affirmed the permanent reality of the bread and wine—a tradition not only important by the weight of the names which affirm it, but still more important because it is grounded on the same principle which prompted the Church's repeated insistence upon our Lord's real humanity, the principle that the supernatural does not destroy the natural substance or nature, but only elevates it to a higher plane; while, on the other hand, the dogma of transubstantiation is closely allied with a deeply monophysite tendency in the Church.[2]

I have cited these instances of *de fide* dogmas in the Roman Church as having implicit in them the claim that authority shall supersede history or do without it. But also it must be remembered that of the "authoritative" teaching of the Roman Church only a small part is strictly claimed as infallible. "A Catholic obedience is tried," says Father Rickaby,[3] "not by the supreme infallible decisions of papal and conciliar authority in matters of faith and morals: such high infallible utterances are rare . . .; but obedience is tried by proceedings and declarations, not infallible, yet authoritative." For example, Pope Leo XIII in 1893 issued an encyclical on "the study of Holy Scripture," addressed especially to ecclesiastics, in which the fullest and most extreme definition possible is given of the nature and scope of the inspiration of the writers of the books of the Bible. The efforts of Newman and others to show that the doctrine of inspiration might be given a more restricted sense, and be rendered compatible with the more certain conclusions of criticism, are utterly disregarded. In the most stringent sense God is declared to be the *author* of everything in the authentic text of the Bible, not only statements affecting faith and morals, but statements on every subject. To deny the infallibility or historical truth of any of its statements is to ascribe falsehood to God.[1] Now, this assertion of verbal inspiration in its most stringent sense as the doctrine of the Church, although the Pope is obviously intending to define the meaning of inspiration for the benefit of the teachers and students of the Church, and to exclude any other meaning, is, I suppose, not reckoned as infallible. There are signs that it is already being ignored. Perhaps in thirty years' time it will be as completely superseded as a much earlier pope's definition of the matter and form of ordination.[2] But the more we reflect on the matter, the more perilous do these not strictly infallible but authoritative utterances seem to be. There is a whole mass of theological utterances which the Roman Catholic student knows are not strictly the word of God—which may turn out not to be true—which yet he must not contradict, and which it is "temerarious" to doubt or at least call into question. The particular encyclical referred to had, it seems to us Anglicans, a disastrous effect on the study of Holy Scripture in the Roman Church. It still makes us feel that some eminent Roman Catholic critics and commentators are writing, not as they would if they were free to express their judgement, but as they dare. This attempt strictly to prohibit free thought among Church students of the Bible over a long period of time by the dogmatic action of authority, backed by its disciplinary resources, when all the time it is admitted that the prohibitory dogma may turn out to be mistaken, seems to us an amazing perversion of authority.

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[1] See *Roman Catholic Claims*, chaps. v–vii.

[2] See *Dissertations*, iii.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 229.

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[1] This amazing encyclical is quoted in *Roman Catholic Claims* (10th and later editions), chap. xi.

[2] Eugenius IV in 1439 in his *Decretum de Unione Armeniorum.* See *Roman Catholic Claims*, chap. ix, p. 149; and *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 79, n 1.

No one can survey the course of European thought since the Roman authority became the dominant factor in Western religion without seeing that it has been on many points, and not chiefly in virtue of decrees for which infallibility is claimed, the great misleader of Europe. It was so in the sanction given over long ages to the principle of persecution for heresy—persecution involving torture and death—which was flat contrary to the mind of the earlier Church, and is inexpressibly repugnant to the mind of Jesus. It was so in the claim implicit in the condemnation of Galileo, that the Church and the Bible have authority in matters of science, and that inductive reasoning from the observation of nature cannot be free when it appears to conflict with statements in the Bible. More recently, as just remarked, it has been so in its attitude towards historical criticism as applied to the Bible. In all these cases the authority of the Church, in Roman hands, did generate, and has kept alive on the vastest scale, a revolt of intellect and even more of properly Christian feeling, against the very idea of authority in religion; and we are bound to confess that, if the Roman idea of authority is the only idea, the revolt has been legitimate.

It is quite true that Protestant bodies have also sanctioned persecution. Anyone who reads the history candidly written of the founding of New England[1] will be obliged to recognize in the Puritan fathers a conception of ecclesiastical authority, and of the duty of persecuting heresy even to torture and death, which is as formidable as anything which can be laid to the charge of Rome. But it was short-lived, because it was incompatible with the whole spirit of the movement in which it occurred. Orthodox Protestantism again has from time to time sought to condemn and penalize free enquiry; but here also its own principles have forced it for very shame to repent. Its faults can never be on the side of over-emphasis on authority. And it must be admitted that by many centuries Rome led the way in these disastrous tendencies. And my point is that it is not only, or perhaps chiefly, by its pronouncements for which infallibility is claimed that Rome has been in certain respects the misleader of Europe, but by that far larger body of authoritative pronouncements which stifle criticism and resistance, but which after the lapse of time may turn out to have been confessedly mistaken.[2]

II

The next point to be noticed in the Romanist conception of authority is that it appears in effect to give a new meaning to *tradition*. The " living voice " of the Church—which, of course, means the Church of the Roman obedience—represents what the tradition has come to be, and can express itself in an " irreformable " dogma, which may in words declare itself to have been received by tradition from the very beginnings of the Christian religion, but which in fact pays no real attention either to the silence of Scripture or to the actual facts about the tradition in its earlier stages.

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[1] This has been admirably done by James Truslow Adams in his *Founding of New England* ("Atlantic Monthly " Press, 1920).

[2] For a practical commentary on the above see *The Reminiscences of a Maynooth Professor* (Dr. McDonald), [Cape, 1925].

As has been shown,[1] the Fathers did really regard the authority of the Church in matters of doctrine as *limited* by the appeal to Scripture. The appeal was to Scripture no doubt as interpreted by the Church tradition. But the function of the Church tradition was to interpret, not to add to, "what was written," and tradition meant the tradition as patent from the beginning. This ancient idea of Church authority was admirably explained in the little work of Vincent of Lerins written A.D. 434—*Adversus profanas omnium novitates haereticorum commonitorium*—which became the classic on the subject. Here the function of tradition is limited to interpreting Scripture, and it is not regarded as an additional source of doctrine; and a famous phrase defines authentic tradition to be what has been held in the Church "ubique," "semper," and "ab omnibus"—that is, in all parts of the Church, as opposed to any one particular Church; always, as opposed to only in recent ages; and by all, i.e. by the general body of the Church, as opposed to the private opinion of particular teachers. It is made quite plain by Vincent that the appeal to antiquity is an additional test, over and above the appeal to general consent.[2]

Now we shall have to discuss the reasonableness of combining the appeal to Scripture with the appeal to tradition, and also the reasonableness of erecting the Scriptures as a final standard of the doctrine of the Christian religion. This will be our business in a future chapter.[3] We shall also have to discuss the bearing of development on this theory of tradition immediately. All that I ask at present is that it should be recognized what a vast difference there is between a theory of the Church which makes it a continuous and living witness to a once-spoken voice —a "faith once for all delivered"—and one which makes it, in effect, a continuous organ of divine revelation. If the former theory is the truth, the authority of the Church is a very restricted authority. For instance, it cannot make the immaculate conception of Mary an article of faith—because no one can reasonably claim for it ancient tradition or scriptural sanction. Or again, it cannot get to know, or become authorized to require of the faithful, more concerning purgatory than the ancient Church knew or than is to be found in Scripture.

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[1] See above, pp. 792–3.

[2] This is acknowledged by Cardinal Franzelin, and more recently by Mgr. Batiffol, to be Vincent's meaning, but is by them repudiated. See *Roman Catholic Claims*, chap. iii, p. 58.

[3] Chap. viii, p. 864.

Plainly in St. Augustine's day there was no tradition about a purgatory in the intermediate state for the imperfect. St. Augustine tended strongly to believe it, as I suppose we almost all of us must do, on grounds of reason. But it has no real grounds in Scripture,[1] which is, in fact, totally silent on the subject. St. Augustine finally can only say in his latest work, "I will not dispute it; for it may perhaps be true."[2] Three centuries later the authority of St. Gregory's *Dialogues*, full of tremendous ghost stories, gives the doctrine unlimited vogue. Gregory quite admits that his vivid teaching is dependent on the new information contained in the visions he records.[3] The approaching end of the world, he thinks, has been the occasion of these enlightening visions. We have thus been allowed to know more than our fathers. But the ancient Church would not admit any new revelation as an addition to the word of God.[1] What an immense difference it would have made if, instead of using the doctrine of purgatory as one of the keystones of its system, with results so disastrous in many ways, the Church had maintained its ancient reticence! It could not deny that there might—there even must be—a purgatory. But it had no authority to proclaim it as part of its message, and still less any authority over it. There was no original tradition of a purgatory and nothing about it in the word of God.

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[1] The text so often quoted, 1 Cor. iii. 15, has nothing to do with it. It concerns not the purging of character but the testing of work, and that by the fire of the last day.

[2] *De Civ.*, xxi, 26. Dr. A. J. Mason in his *Purgatory* (Longmans) has given the best account of the development of the doctrine.

[3] See Mason, *op. cit*, p. 43. The passage of chief importance is in St. Gregory's *Dialogi*, iv, 39–40. Peter, Gregory's submissive disciple, asks why in these last times so many things about souls are becoming clear which were unknown before, "so that by manifest revelations and disclosures the world to come appears to invade us and open itself to us"; and Gregory replies it is like the dawning light before the sun rises—the clouds of this disappearing world are shot through with rays of the light that is to be.

I say, then, that no one can dispute the importance of the ancient rule of faith in restricting the authority of the Church and keeping the conscience of men free from additional burdens. There is something infallible[2] in the Church, which is the original Gospel, proclaimed by the apostles, and recorded in the New Testament. The Church is endowed with the Spirit of truth in order to realize, to propagate, and to defend this faith and to explicate its meaning. But it cannot add to it. Where Scripture gives no information (for "we know in part and we prophesy in part" only), the Church must be content to remain silent till the day dawns of greater light. Meanwhile men of discernment may enquire and speculate and suggest pious opinions. But the Church can make no new article of faith. In that category, as Vincent constantly insists in various phrases, what is really new is certainly false.[3]

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[1] This is still the official position of the Roman Church, though it is manifestly violated in practice.

[2] Appended Note A, p. 825, on the Infallibility of the Church.

[3] No one interested in the subject ought to be content without reading Vincent of Lerins's luminous little book. No doubt, though he does not mention the name of the great Augustine, he has him in his mind, alongside of Origen and Tertullian whom he does name, as an instance of one who had not only done brilliant

The history of the alteration by the Church of the West of its ancient rule of faith is fairly plain. The first five centuries were days of general enlightenment and there were a multitude of Church teachers and an intelligent public. By the beginning of the seventh century things had changed. In the West at least Gregory the Great stood almost alone. As we have seen, in respect to the after-world he did not hold to the ancient rule. He admitted new teaching based on fresh disclosures. And his word became law for the dark ages. When we reach the period of the controversy concerning Berengar and transubstantiation (eleventh century), the distinction between the authority of Scripture and every other kind of authority appears to have vanished.[1] Neither Berengar nor his adversaries appear to be conscious of it. The appeal is to authorities of various kinds, and they are all called "authentic scriptures." Two centuries later, in St. Thomas Aquinas, what the modern student finds most baffling is the total absence of any criticism of his authorities. His argument in particular cases manifestly depends not only on the subtlety of his reasoning, which is seldom at fault, but on the relative value of the different authorities to which he defers. And of these we find no reasoned estimate. Meanwhile the actual teaching of the Church had reached such a point that it must make its appeal to an "unwritten tradition," additional to Scripture, if it were to be justified. Practically, though perhaps not theoretically, St. Thomas *adds* tradition to Scripture, as a source of doctrine, and tradition, as I have said, treated quite uncritically. At the fourth session of the Council of Trent (1546) the written books of Scripture and the

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service to the Church, but had also "tried" it by promulgating ideas (the conception of absolute predestination, etc.) which were neither according to antiquity nor consent, but which enthusiastic disciples would fasten upon the Church as obligatory doctrine.

[1] See *Dissert.*, p. 250.

"unwritten" traditions, whether received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or dictated to them by the Holy Spirit, were formally put upon the same level of authority, in respect of matters of faith as well as of discipline, with the books of Scripture.[1] This was a serious alteration of the ancient rule. But it makes little difference in fact if tradition is interpreted, as Vincent insists that it must be, in the sense that nothing belongs to tradition which cannot be shown to have been held in the Church from the beginning and universally. Still, in the Creed of Pope Pius IV, who brought the Council of Trent to a conclusion, the Scriptures are to be interpreted not "otherwise than according to [*juxta*] the unanimous consent of the Fathers."[2] Döllinger pleaded his oath to this Creed as preventing him from assenting to the Vatican decree concerning the infallibility of the Pope. But in the decrees of the Vatican Council there is a notable difference from the Creed of Pope Pius. There it is forbidden to interpret Scripture "*contrary to* the unanimous consent of the Fathers."[3] There may, apparently, be additions to their unanimous teaching, if they do not amount to contradictions. Cardinal Franzelin, also, as we have just seen, rejects the restraint which Vincent would impose on dogmatic novelties. And, in fact, without the abandonment of the restrictions of Vincent certain Roman dogmas are plainly disqualified. But here we touch the question of the meaning of "development," which will be the subject of the next chapter.

III

The third point to notice in the Romanist conception of authority is that it involves centralization.[1] In the early conception of authority there is no centralization. Cyprian seems at one moment of his life to proclaim an unrestricted independence among bishops, though he can hardly have meant this in its full sense. Augustine corrects this exaggerated estimate by bringing the individual bishop under the authority of the Council of Bishops, and finally of the General Council. But the idea of the General Council was that its predominant authoritativeness depended upon the fact that in it all the streams of tradition in all the different churches of the world were represented, and could check one another.[2] Thus its decision represented the consentient witness of all parts of the Christian world. And again the conclusion reached was dependent for its final authority upon the acceptance of the conciliar decision by the churches, when the bishops had returned to their sees and promulgated it. Thus the conception of the General Council suggests no centralized authority, but, on the contrary, a common tradition or authority universally diffused, and needing to be laboriously collected. But the Roman mind demanded something more easily effective—a central authority at Rome and, as it soon appeared, a spiritual monarchy. In the developed papacy it is regularly assumed that monarchy is the form of government most to be desired, as in temporal things so in spiritual. No doubt this follows from a certain conception of effectiveness. But it is bought at a great price, and it has inflicted on Christendom deplorable losses. First, in that it has tended to narrowness. It has emphasized the virtue of obedience at the expense of liberty and diversity and reverence for truth—qualities for which the earlier and more really catholic idea of authority allowed ample scope. This has been especially apparent since the Counter-Reformation, and since the influence of the Jesuits became dominant, alike in respect of doctrine and of discipline. Secondly, it has involved violence to history and has tended to schism. The Papal Monarchy makes claims on history which history fairly interpreted wholly refuses to verify. The Greek-speaking Church, holding fast to an earlier conception of authority, has consistently, in its official utterances, and in the opinion of almost all its theologians, repudiated the papal claim, and on wholly valid grounds.[1] The more and more insistent pressure of those claims on the part of Rome meant schism in the long run.

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[1] Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, § lxxxi.

[2] *Op. cit.*, lxxxii.

[3] *Op. cit.*, lxxxix.

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[1] It involves centralization in a double sense—in the sense argued in the text, and in the sense that within the Roman Church the authority is (I believe) restricted to the *ecclesia docens.* In the New Testament the Church officers have a special function as teachers, but the Church as a whole is felt to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." The whole Church is appealed to in moments of controversy. This tradition is maintained in the Church of the Fathers. And still the Eastern Orthodox Church maintains it, repudiating the Roman distinction between the *ecclesia docens* and the *ecclesia discens.* The hierarchy in the Roman Church, which is the *ecclesia docens,* "consists of the Sovereign Pontiff, who is assisted by the Sacred College of Cardinals, and by several sacred congregations . . . ; of the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops; of the apostolic delegates, vicars, and prefects; and of certain abbots and prelates." The ordinary parish priest does not, I believe, belong to it.

[2] It is noteworthy that when Irenaeus assigns a special importance to the Roman Church in maintaining the tradition, it is because its pre-eminence brought Christian men from all parts of the world to it; so that tradition there was not merely local but ecumenical, because the tradition was there maintained by men from all parts. This is the undoubted meaning of the famous phrase (Iren., *c. Haer.*, iii, 3). See references in *Roman Catholic Claims*, pp. 97–8. Rome after the fifth century quite lost this distinction and became for many centuries strangely isolated.

And lastly, what is the most serious point of all, the facts of history being what they are, the maintenance of the Roman claim has involved a constant perversion of truth. This is an awful charge. But it has been pressed home by two of the most learned of modern historians who were themselves shining lights of the Roman Church—Von Döllinger and Acton. The one was excommunicated, the other lived and died in the communion of Rome. But he did not mince his words in charging with treason to the truth the maintainers of the later Roman claim. Certainly as one reads the record of forged documents and misquotations which have been used to support the Papal claim, it seems an inevitable conclusion that an assertion of authority which has needed so much falsehood to support it in the past, and still needs so much distortion of fact in its histories, cannot be wholly of God.[1]

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[1] Appended Note B, "The Constant Repudiation by the East of the Roman Claim," p. 827.

But as I write such words there rises before me the vision of the glories and sanctities of the Roman Church, as conspicuous in modern as in ancient days. Certainly God is with them and His Spirit is powerful among them. But the Roman Church claims to be the whole Church. Whereas it seems to me to be written on the face of history that, for all its glory and strength and beauty, it is a one-sided development. It is not the whole. As to the combination in one communion of so much excellence with so much defect, and of so much truth with so much treason to truth, I shall have something to say at a later stage.[2]

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[1] I think Denny's *Papalism* (Rivington) is fairly unanswerable. It suffers through following the lines of the encyclical of Leo XIII, *Satis Cognitum*, which is not widely read to-day. But this enables the author to cover the whole ground of debate. Also following the encyclical, he says little about the theory of development. He assumes the Roman theory to be—what officially it is—that the doctrine of the Vatican Council has always been in substance the doctrine of the Church. Though he occasionally shows an unwillingness to admit points in the Roman case which he had better have admitted, his case on the whole is (as I have said) fairly unanswerable. Our other strongest book is Father Puller's *Primitive Saints and the See of Rome* (Longmans).

[2] See below, p 977.

APPENDED NOTE A (see p. 819)

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

There is something deep in human nature which calls for an infallible refuge. It has been found in conscience, and in Scripture, and in the Church, and in the Pope. But as soon as you begin to cross-question the authority of these diverse seats of infallibility, in each case, though in various degrees, you find a grave necessity for discrimination. The suggested authority is infallible only when it speaks under such and such conditions. And the difficulty is to distinguish when these conditions are fulfilled. Conscience may, and sometimes does, simply convey the voice of God to the soul. But it may be perverted by ignorance or invincible prejudice or social tradition or individual wilfulness, so as to convey a guidance which is very far from being divine. Scripture, again, is the record of a real word of God in the different stages of its delivery, and the Word of God is infallible. Here is something which in its main lines is clearly distinguishable. But Scripture contains much that is imperfect in its earlier stages, for the divine education of mankind was gradual, and what was right for ancient Israel would not be right for us. Also the record of the divine message is given in a literature which contains historical records of very different historical values and statements of a quasi-scientific character which are not according to the facts as we know them. The word of God is infallible, but you cannot call the books which convey it to us infallible without disaster.

Again, the function of the Church is to convey the message of God which is infallible, and it has authority to interpret it and proclaim it as true. There are certain occasions—the Ecumenical Councils—when the Church has squarely faced a question definitely raised, and has definitely answered it after full consideration, and in a representative assembly, and the answer has been accepted so widely and continuously that you may truly say, This is the voice of the Catholic Church; this you can rely upon with the same confidence which inspired the first church at Jerusalem to say, " It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." And in spite of the disagreeable moral impression which some of the General Councils leave upon our minds, I believe the claim to be justified.

And we ought to feel the same sort of reliance upon the diffused witness of the Church in proportion as it is really unanimous—ubique, semper, ab omnibus—and can make a legitimate appeal to Holy Scripture.

But what average human nature is apt to want is a much more general infallibility. Yet in fact "the voice of the Church," even before the Church was divided, has been through its ordinary mouthpieces very far from infallible. Not even the warmest defender of the infallibility of the Church or of the Pope can fail to recognize such serious limitations to the infallibility in which he desires to believe as to deprive it largely of its practical value. The fact is that when men cry out for an infallible voice they are generally crying out for something which, in the large sense in which they want it, it does not appear to be the will of God we should have. There is a word of God which is utterly trustworthy of which the Church is the carrier; and it has divinely given authority to teach it and to interpret it; and its great central utterances where it speaks with fullest unanimity we can rely upon with a wholehearted confidence. But in view of the facts of history we had better be careful in talking about the infallibility of the Church. Christ is the truth, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of truth, and infallible. And because He is in the Church there is something there infallible.[1] But indefectibility and God-given authority are, in general, better words to use concerning the Church.

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[1] St. Thomas tells us that to say "I believe in the Church" is permissible only because "our faith is referred to the Holy Spirit who sanctifies the Church, so that the sense is 'I believe in the Holy Spirit who sanctifies the Church.' But it is better, and in accordance with the more usual practice, to omit the word 'in' and say only 'I believe [that] the Holy Catholic Church [exists],' Credo sanctam ecclesiam Catholicam." So also Rufinus and Augustine. In fact, however, the Eastern Creeds, including the "Nicene" and some Western Creeds, certainly contain the *εἰς* or "in" before the mention of the Church. And where the preposition was not repeated, it was commonly understood. See *Church and Ministry*, p. 14, n. 2.

APPENDED NOTE B (see p. 823)

THE CONSTANT REPUDIATION BY THE EAST OF THE ROMAN CLAIM

It appears in history that the Greek-speaking Church never regarded it as part of the faith that it had received that the Bishop of Rome has *by divine right* any special position in the Church. We Anglicans have always appealed, in vindication of this statement, specially to the formal utterances of Eastern Councils reckoned as ecumenical—the third canon of Constantinople and the twenty-eighth of Chalcedon. (See *Roman Catholic Claims*, p. 102.) Romans reply that the latter—the most explicit—canon was not accepted by Rome and that the Easterns must therefore have admitted that it was not valid. But this is not the case. Whatever polite and conciliatory language they thought it wise to use to the powerful pontiff at Rome, the canon remained in their eyes valid, and was explicitly reaffirmed in the Council held *in Trullo* (can. xxxvi). Cf. Duchesne, *Origines du Culte chrétien*, p. 24: " Leur voix " (i.e. Leo's voice and his successors') " fut peu écoutée: on leur accorda sans doute des satisfactions, mais de pure cérémonie."

Certainly Eastern theologians recognize a leadership of Peter among the apostles, as we all do. Chrysostom is quoted as going beyond this; but on investigation [1] it seems to be doubtful whether he recognizes any authority in Peter peculiar to him; and of course Antioch, where Chrysostom was teaching, was, like Rome, a "see of Peter," and may have loved to recognize his primacy in a somewhat fuller sense than other churches. But neither Chrysostom nor the other Eastern doctors can be shown to have recognized the persistence of the Petrine privilege (whatever it was) in the bishops of Rome only. When St. Chrysostom, for instance, speaks of our Lord as having intrusted His sheep " to Peter and those who came after him " (*de Sacerdot.*, ii, cap. i, § 88), it is of all the bishops he is plainly speaking.

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[1] See Denny's *Papalism*, pp. 86 ff.

CHAPTER VII

THE TESTS OF LEGITIMATE DEVELOPMENT

THOSE who assent to the course of thought pursued in this volume find themselves maintaining an idea of the authority of the Church which is both conservative and moderate. It is conservative because it postulates not only that the Christ is the final word of God's self-revelation to men, but also that the apostolic preaching, which was the source of the Church tradition, gave the true and final interpretation of the person of Christ and of the mission of the Spirit, and that their preaching finds its adequate record in the books of the New Testament. It is a moderate view of the authority of the Church because, while it would bid us hold that it was the duty of the Church to propagate, defend, and interpret the teaching of the New Testament, it would deny that it had authority to add to it, or at any rate to claim acceptance as part of the faith for anything either contrary to or over and above "what had been written." In the next chapter the question of the legitimacy and reasonableness of this claim for Scripture will come up for discussion. But we have also found that the greatest of the Christian Churches —the Roman communion—in a measure in theory and much more completely in fact repudiates this moderate canon of Church authority. It adds tradition to Scripture as an equal source of knowledge about the contents of the revelation, and in effect claims that "tradition" means what at any period the Roman Church has come to hold, whatever the records of the past may say.

It is to account for the difference between the present teaching of the Roman Church and the original tradition that appeal has been made to the idea of development. The present Roman tradition, it is contended, represents not simply the original tradition, but the proper development of the original tradition. The principle had been appealed to in one sense by the famous Jesuit Petau, or Petavius, the antagonist of Bishop Bull in the seventeenth century; and in a rather different sense by Möhler in his *Symbolik*, published in 1832. But for England and America the idea gained a quite new importance by the publication in 1845[1] of Newman's brilliant essay on *The Development of Christian Doctrine*. Newman in this essay finds in the idea of development the instrument for bridging over for his own mind and conscience the interval between the present doctrine of the Roman Church and that of the early Church, in the study of which he had so long been immersed.[2] And he gives the idea an extension which sounds, as one first reads it, startlingly 'modern,' or even 'modernist.' "Christianity," he said, "though represented in prophecy as a kingdom, came into the world as an idea rather than an institution, and has had to wrap itself in clothing, and fit itself with armour of its own providing, and form the instruments and methods for its own prosperity and welfare."[1] The amount of change involved in development was illustrated in some startling arguments—as when it was suggested that one effect of the Arian controversy was that "it discovered a new sphere, if we may so speak, in the realms of light, to which the Church had not yet assigned its inhabitant." This "new sphere" was the position which Arianism had imagined for the Son—that of a creature, but a creature invested with divine attributes. This had been adjudged by the Church to be a sphere too low for the Son. But it was left vacant, and in course of time Mary the Mother could be found to fill it. "I am not," wrote Newman, "stating conclusions which were drawn out in the controversy, but premises which were laid broad and deep. It was then . . . determined that to exalt a creature was no recognition of its divinity." Indeed the conclusion suggested was not drawn out in the controversy! for all the Fathers had argued that the Arian Christ, as a being who was a creature and yet was to be worshipped, involved an idolatrous and, for Christians, for ever impossible conception.

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[1] Fourteen years before Charles Darwin published his *Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection*. The controversy about Newman's book is remarkable as showing what ideas about development were *not* current when he wrote: see especially Mozley's *Theory of Development*, written in reply to Newman, pp. 3 ff. (Rivington, first published 1847).

[2] Cf. Acton's *Correspondence* (ed. Figgis and Laurence, 1917), i, p. 77. Acton is accounting for the suspicion of Newman entertained at Rome, and he writes: "J'arrive à croire qu'on le soupçonnait à cause du Développement qui était, en effet, une révolution, et qui lui donnait un peu l'air d'un personnage qui exigeait, pour le satisfaire, une théorie imaginée exprès pour lui et qui justifiait sa première manière, ses attaques, et la lenteur de sa conversion, jusqu'à ce qu'il l'eût découverte. Car en Angleterre comme en Amérique, elle était toute nouvelle, et on sentait qu'elle renversait l'ancienne défensive Catholique en faisant droit à ses adversaires."

Of course Newman's whole argument for development was made to depend upon the existence of an infallible authority to preside over and judge of developments. Nevertheless, the argument was startling enough. It stirred against itself not only Anglican controversialists,[2] but indignant Romans,[3] scandalized at what seemed the abandonment of the whole tradition of Roman apology. It served its primary purpose in building a bridge for the author himself with many others to pass into the Roman communion. But in later years he would appear to have retreated from his first position, and he used language which reaffirms the traditional view:

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[1] p. 116. See also the passage quoted in Oliver Quick's *Liberalism, Modernism, and Tradition*, pp. 27 ff.

[2] The ablest answer, brilliant as the essay itself, was J. B. Mozley's already alluded to.

[3] See Mozley, *op. cit.*, pp. 215 ff.

> "First of all, and in as few words as possible, and *ex abundanti cautela*, every Catholic holds that the Christian dogmas were in the Church from the time of the apostles; that they were ever in their substance what they are now; that they existed before the formulas were publicly adopted, in which as time went on they were defined and recorded."[1]

I

It was the extremer doctrine of the essay which caught the attention of the world and fascinated the imagination of many, and we will return upon the idea of development, doctrinal and general, in its larger sense. But first let us take the idea stated in the last quotation from Newman, which practically represents the old view of tradition, and which is still the official language of the Roman Church; and we will seek to answer two questions: (1) does it really cover the action of the Church of the first centuries in formulating the Creeds and the decisions of the Ecumenical Councils? and (2) does it cover the later action of the Church of Rome?

(1) The answer to the first question is with a certain qualification in the affirmative. In the earliest period of the Church, before St. Paul's conversion, it does not appear as if the Church had any other thought in its mind except that of the divine glory of the exalted

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[1] *Tracts Theol. and Eccl.*, p. 287. "After sixteen years," wrote Lord Acton in 1890, "spent in the Church of Rome, Newman was inclined to guard and narrow his theory of development."

Christ, and the power of the Divine Spirit bestowed upon them. It does not appear to have yet asked itself theological questions about Christ or about the Spirit. When then I affirm Newman's later words, I must lay stress upon the phrase "from the time of the apostles" as explaining what is meant by "ever." I mean that the doctrine of St. Paul and St. John is really in substance the doctrine of the Nicene Creed, neither more nor less, and really the only doctrine which interprets the Christ of the Gospels. And if the Church was really set in the world to maintain the teaching of the New Testament about His divine sonship and His incarnation and His indisputably real manhood, it had no choice but to condemn the theories of His person which it did in fact condemn; and we know no better formulas to protect the essential truth than the words the Church selected to be used.[1] Thus I think the claim of the Fathers of the Councils that they were simply protecting the apostolic teaching is a true claim; and though early apologists and theologians had, as was to be expected, in their first attempts to explain their beliefs, used language such as was repudiated in later days, yet the tradition, as Origen stated, had always really ascribed to Christ both Godhead and manhood.

When we pass from the doctrine of the Incarnation to that of the Trinity, we are still entitled to maintain that in the New Testament the name of the one God had already become the threefold name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, each personal, distinct, and co-inherent; and in spite of the ambiguity of such writers as Hermas, Justin Martyr, and even Irenaeus about the Holy Spirit, there was always behind them the tradition of the threefold name of God, as it appears in St. Matt. xxviii. 19,[1] and in Clement's formula for the "living God" ("As God liveth, and the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, and the Holy Spirit"), and in Origen's statement of the tradition that "the Holy Ghost is associated in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son." It is true, then, that the definition of the Trinity did only give distinctness and explicitness to the conception already implicit in the apostolic teaching.[2]

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[1] See Appended Note on Dr. Mackintosh's criticisms of the phraseology of the Councils, p. 848. On development within the New Testament, see a criticism of Dr. McNeile, p. 898.

(2) On the other hand, there was demonstrably nothing implicit in that tradition to the effect that the primacy of Peter among the apostles was inherited by divine right by the Bishop of Rome—still less that he was endowed with monarchical authority or infallibility. Such a doctrine was there neither in terms nor "in substance."[3] The Greek-speaking

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[1] Which, whether it be an authentic word of Christ or no, certainly represents the Trinitarian belief of the Church to which the Palestinian editor of the First Gospel belonged, not much after the destruction of Jerusalem.

[2] The decree of the second Council of Nicaea, which is claimed as ecumenical, rests on a different basis, as it concerns a practice (the veneration of images) rather than a doctrine. See below, p. 911.

[3] I have already (p. 806) referred to Fr. Janssens' criticism of a statement of Fr. Woodlock's. It contains a very interesting distinction between the "fundamental" doctrines of the Christian faith (meaning, I suppose, the doctrines of the Deity of Christ and the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity, and perhaps the doctrines of the sacraments in general and the ministry and the resurrection —but he does not specify what doctrines are included in the term) which "do not admit of real development" and others, such as the infallibility of the Pope, which do. Of the fundamental dogma of the deity of Christ, he says: "It has always been explicitly held. There was no development in the doctrine, but only in its terminology." And of fundamentals in general: "Quod non fuit ab initio doctum et universaliter creditum non pertinet ad Christianae fidei fundamenta." But of the infallibility of the Pope (a non-fundamental doctrine, therefore) he writes: "It has admitted of a true development, a real doctrinal progress. It has been held but implicitly in the first three centuries and has been doubted afterwards, even until the time of the Vatican Council." I should venture to criticize this statement. I should have thought that of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity it was true to say that it was held only implicitly in the apostolic or sub-apostolic times and became explicit. But of the infallibility that it was neither explicitly nor implicitly held in the early centuries.

Church neither recognized this as tradition nor ever came to acknowledge it as a legitimate claim. Nor does Scripture suggest it. This is as certain as history can make it. So, again, there was no tradition about a purgatory in the intermediate state and really nothing in Scripture about it. Again, though the Church always believed that the bread and wine in the eucharist became the body and blood of Christ in some real sense, there was nothing in Scripture or tradition to suggest that the substance of bread and wine ceased to exist by the consecration of the elements, and on the other hand, there was a strong tradition in the contrary sense. Finally, there was nothing even remotely suggesting that Mary was immaculately conceived. Accordingly it is a certain conclusion that, if all that the Church has the right to do is to make explicit in language what has always been substantially present in the tradition from the days of the apostles, the Roman dogma concerning transubstantiation, and the dogma affirming purgatory under anathema, and the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and the dogma concerning the Bishop of Rome, are as dogmas certainly illegitimate.

II

It is the feeling that the justification of the Roman dogmas needs something more than the traditional formula which has made Newman's earlier and much freer conception of development very popular among those who are looking Romewards and among some Roman Catholic exponents of doctrine. But also, and much more widely, the general prevalence of the idea of development has reinforced Newman's conception, often in a sense quite antagonistic to his own. German writers of *Dogmengeschichte* and French modernists have accepted it as a matter of course. Also it is quite plain that the principle of development must be applied not only to the doctrines of the Church but to its institutions and methods as a whole. So we will turn back to the freer conception of development as Newman first suggested it, in order to see if he can help us, or we can help ourselves, towards some adequate conception of development, both in Church doctrine and more generally in the Church as an institution; and also whether we can discover the test or tests which would seem to distinguish legitimate from illegitimate developments. And we will take this latter point first.

For Newman was not content simply to accept the infallibility of the defining authority as rendering all further argument unnecessary. He seeks to establish tests by which to discriminate legitimate "development" from "corruption." They are the "preservation of the type or idea," "continuity of principle," "power of assimilation," "early anticipation," "logical sequence," "preservative addition," "chronic continuance." Now one of the most effective points in Mozley's reply to Newman is that he calls our attention to the slight consideration paid by Newman to one of the most characteristic features in developments all the world over, by which institutions may radically change their character in the course of time for good and all, viz. one-sided exaggeration of some tendency or feature which was always present in the system, but which had been balanced originally by other tendencies or features which in course of time were suppressed or ceased to act. So it was that the Roman State passed from being a republic to being an autocratic monarchy. Similarly no one would question that *in the West* the development of the Papacy as a doctrine and as an institution was a real development, which exhibited unmistakable continuity of principle since the days of Damasus, and power of assimilation, and which had early anticipations going back to the second century, and which was in logical sequence; and could claim that its "addition" to the original idea of Christianity was "preservative" of the idea as entertained at Rome, and that it showed, step after step, "chronic continuance." Newman triumphantly asks where in the Roman development you can find a point at which it breaks with the past either as doctrine or as institution. Very likely nowhere. Neither can you in the process by which historical institutions or ideas have generally developed. There are, of course, revolutions and chasms in history. But they are apt to lead to reactions. The most permanent transformations are apt to come gradually. And the result of the actual development may prove to be a one-sided accentuation of some feature or idea at the expense of others, which again in total result may be deterioration, not progress. Without any manifest break or violent change the last state of an institution or doctrine may become worse than the first simply in virtue of this one-sidedness of development, seriously altering and corrupting the original "type." Nothing, in fact, would seem to be more indisputable than that the Roman development of Christianity was a one-sided exaggeration, congenial to the old imperial spirit of Rome, of the element of regimental and official authority in the Church; and that it was accomplished by the gradual repudiation and supersession of all the restraints upon the action of authority which the ideas and institutions of the early Church supplied. Such restraints were the requirement laid on dogmatic authority to justify itself by the appeal to Scripture; and the assertion of the fundamental identity of the episcopal authority in all bishops; and the consequent subordination of all individual bishops or provinces of bishops to the General Council; and the refusal of the idea of physical force or state compulsion as an instrument in propagating the truth; and the recognition of the democratic element in Church government; and the freedom of appeal to Scripture and reason on the part of all Christians. All these were unmistakably principles of the early Church which in the Roman system were gradually superseded and denied, and in effect dropped out. So authority developed towards autocracy.

It is also evident that during the dark age which followed the break-up of the Western Empire, and the Middle Ages in which society reconstituted itself, the Church maintained its hold on the people by large concessions to popular appetites in religion, with little or no regard to scriptural sanction. Purgatory was a popular doctrine, softening the terror of hell; again, it was popular to soften the terror of purgatory by extending into the unseen world the Church's power of remitting penalties or granting indulgences, and for this purpose the doctrine of the treasury of merits which the Church could dispense was established. Again, there was a popular demand for intercessors, powerful in heaven and more lenient than the awful judge Jesus Christ could be believed to be, and it was allowed to prevail. To all these popular appetites the Church showed itself charitable indeed. But the result would have astonished the Fathers of the Church; and the type of religion which came to prevail could not be called scriptural.

The time came when the Roman Church was full of glaring scandals; and the Reformation became a revolution which deprived the Church of the Roman obedience of many of its fairest provinces. Arrested under the blow, the Roman Church reformed and recovered itself in what is called the Counter-Reformation. It reformed itself in respect of many of those moral scandals which had chiefly provoked the revolution. But the Counter-Reformation in its results intensified dogmatic autocracy and regimentation, and left the springs of popular superstition as open as ever. On the whole, it is impossible not to judge the Roman Church, with all its wonderful powers and spiritual glories, to be a one-sided development of the Christianity of the New Testament and the early Church, in which multitudes of men and women and those of the best, who would have been surely amongst the most whole-hearted of the disciples of Jesus, can find no home. In regard to them the very things in which the Roman Church glories as the instruments of its effectiveness have been really its hindrances.

There are a great many people in every age or country, and in some ages and countries the great majority, who are prepared readily enough to accept their religion absolutely on authority, without enquiry and without any obvious horror of superstition, if only the authority will give them a fair guarantee of salvation in the world to come and of consolation in the troubles of this life—and, it must be added, in the case of the majority, without making any very exacting moral demand. But there are some in every age, and in our generation and country they are the majority of good religious people, who are quite incapable of this sort of blind submission, without what would seem to them an act of treason against the light. They are people who, in the spirit of the Reformation, will accept nothing but what can be shown them to be really the teaching of the New Testament—and there is still a great, though mostly inarticulate, multitude of such people; or they are honest students who must "test all things" with all the powers of their mind and by the freest enquiry they can give; or they are people to whom dogmas are not attractive, but who are aflame for the building of the Kingdom of God, and whom the spectacle of injustice and needless suffering in human life stirs as with the call of a trumpet; or they are ordinary sensible Englishmen with a horror of superstition. To multitudes of such men and women the Roman Church, as it stands, is utterly remote and impossible ; yet, with the best of them, we feel, as I have said, that they would have been among the most ready disciples of our Lord and of the apostles, and they would have been at home in the primitive Church, carried along by its moral enthusiasm and the spirit of brotherhood.

This one-sidedness or narrowness in some directions is no argument against the Roman Church as a great and glorious part of the Church Catholic. For every part of the Church has its lamentably manifest limitations. But it is a very strong reason for refusing to recognize the Roman Church as the whole Church. For surely it is self-evident that if the love and the claim of God are perfectly disclosed in our Lord, the Church which is His body must be—exclusive indeed where He would have been exclusive, but inclusive where He would have been inclusive. It cannot be intended that it should be narrowed as it comes down the ages, or present obstacles where there were originally none. All parts of the Church alike have in fact created needless and formidable obstacles and scandals for good souls, whether by toleration of abuses or in other ways. But they can repent and reform themselves. The Roman Church of the Counter-Reformation did gallantly set itself to reform certain moral abuses in its system which scandalized the conscience of men before the Reformation, and played a large part in provoking the protest which produced schism. But the Roman Church appears to have worked the intellectual obstacles into its dogmatic system ; they have been made "irreformable" ; and it has thus made itself incapable of "receiving" some of those whom Christ would certainly have received. It is a one-sided development which has made itself exclusive.

III

Without further reference to Newman's essay, let us go back upon this postulate—that any development in the doctrine or practice of the Church which narrows it, so that it is no longer a home for men of goodwill who in its earlier days would readily have found a home in it, is thereby marked as a spurious development.

It is remarkable that in the discussion of "development" in connexion with the Catholic religion two mistakes have been commonly made. It has been assumed that development is the same thing as progress—a mistake to which the early enthusiasts for development in all departments were very prone. But we know it is a profound mistake. Every institution develops; but the development—whether by intensification or by assimilation—may be for the worse and not for the better; or in some respects for the better and in others for the worse, as appears to have been the case with the Roman Church. But also another mistake has been made. Attention has been almost concentrated on the development of doctrine. Now of course in any Christian Church the doctrine it teaches is an important part of the whole spiritual structure; but by the development of the Church we ought to mean something much wider and deeper than the intensification and amplification of doctrines by a sort of logical process. The Church was set in the world to develop, not mainly by amplification of doctrines, nor by the increasing provision of plain answers to plain questions, which perhaps ought never to have been asked or answered, but by demonstrating its power to become the truly catholic home of all races and kinds of men. All sorts of human faculties and dispositions and personal needs are capable of being enriched and sanctified and met and harmonized by the Holy Spirit. And it is only by such gradual penetration of the darkness by the light that the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which lie hid in Christ—who is the light of the whole world and not merely of a section of it—can be progressively appropriated, and Christ Himself brought to fulfilment in His manifestation on earth.

This expansive function the Church Catholic was to fulfil, not primarily as a teacher of doctrine, but by the exhibition of a life—the corporate life of a community—which by its moral attractiveness and power was to impress and win men and convert them to the acceptance of its message. And it is fairly obvious that if the Church is to fulfil this function effectively, while there must be something which must be called essential catholicity—something which alone entitles any society to be reckoned a part of the Catholic Church of Christ, and which it must always assert and maintain—the Church needs also to have as free a power of adjustment and mobility as is consistent with real continuity. It went out into a world which proved to be a very changing world. There was first the world of the Greco-Roman Empire, and in this the Greek-speaking Church, with all its faults, showed its power and won its glory. Then, to take account only of the West, there was the world dominated by the barbarian invaders—the dark age—and the renascent world of mediaeval feudalism. Then was the glory of the Roman Church with its Benedictine monasticism and its papal authority. Something of Christ had been really manifested in the world order. There succeeded the period of the modern nations, armed against one another in successive rivalries; and the world of modern industrialism, almost cynically repudiating the control of Christian principles; and the world of inductive science and criticism claiming absolute emancipation from ecclesiastical authority; and the world of modern individualism with its startling contrasts of wealth and destitution. No one can say that in this new world of many aspects Christ has been manifested in His Church. On the whole, the Church has devoted itself to private soul-saving and works of mercy, which are parts, but not the whole of its work. In the international world its voice has hardly made itself heard effectively as a moral authority at all. The attempt in the fifteenth century to resuscitate the General Council as a supernational authority, and as supreme over the central papacy, proved a failure; and its failure was in great part the cause of the protest which rent the fabric of the Western Church. And Erasmus' *Complaint of Peace* remained unattended to. Again, the failure of the Church to make intelligible and effective the principle of brotherhood in modern industrialism is conspicuous. It has seemed to have no courage for the fray. Its most decisive action was a negative one—its abandonment of the antiquated prohibition of usury, the place of which ought to have been taken by some positive assertion of moral principle. Face to face with the claim of science it took a disastrous line towards Galileo, asserting that a conclusion of science could not be right because the Bible said otherwise—as if it were a function of the Bible to control science on its own field; and, in the same field, the like mistakes have been frequently made. Thoughtful people have been asking whether Christianity has failed; and more thoughtful people have been replying that it is *we* who have failed to apply the Christianity of Christ. But if we go to the root of the matter, we find it has been that the Church—in all its forms—has lacked mobility.

A religion claiming to be permanent and universal, and appealing to the permanent and universal elements and needs in man, but at the same time set in a changing world, presents a special problem. For in each more or less settled age and civilization the permanent religion becomes incrusted with impermanent intellectual assumptions and social institutions from which, when the turn of the wheel comes, and the ideas and institutions are seen to be changing, it can only be disentangled with immense friction and difficulty. And in each new age the prophets of the renascence are intoxicated with the new learning and lamentably unconscious how much they need the old. To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers is a hard task. It needs a deep wisdom to teach the Church to bring forth out of her treasures things new and old. But it is evident that to deal with such a situation the Church must ask for the maximum of positive mobility that is compatible with real continuity; and that in this relatively mobile self-adjustment lies the principle of true development—not in the accumulation of dogmas.

But if this has been apparent in Europe, it has been even more apparent in the efforts of the Church since the sixteenth century to convert the heathen world. The efforts of early Jesuit missionaries to accommodate Christianity to the Eastern atmosphere were not, I suppose, fortunate, and they were perhaps justly condemned by the Roman authorities. But they showed a true instinct. And if to-day we contemplate the world of missions in the East, there is one lamentation everywhere heard—that we dragged our Western developments and Western controversies and Western ritual and Western ideas of organization and efficiency into an alien atmosphere. These things do not belong to essential Catholicism. We should have sought to start again much further back. We have lacked mobility.

What essential Catholicism is in respect of doctrine and in respect of order is a question which, in part, an attempt has been made to answer in these volumes and to which we shall shortly return; but can we not agree that in any case it falls far short of that highly Western complex of organization, dogma, ceremony, and controversy which we sought to impart to the East and to acclimatize there? It would have been much wiser to convey a simpler message and leave it to fructify and develop on Eastern soil as an indigenous growth. We have shown a lack of mobility.

And may we not assert the general proposition that, while some things are essentials of Catholic Christianity, the smaller the requirements to be carried over from one epoch to another and one race to another, the better? May we not assent to the proposition of Erasmus, "Let the essentials of the faith be limited to the fewest articles possible"?[1]

And if this is so, is there any technical test of the legitimacy of a doctrinal development so important as the requirement that what it asserts shall be really found implicit at least in Scripture—specially of course in the New Testament? This test recognizes the danger of extending the dogmatic requirement, and the necessity of its restriction, as the very condition of Catholic breadth; and it provides the effective safeguard against the peril. We cannot readily conceive that the requirements which our Lord makes on men in these later ages through His Church should be substantially different in emphasis or stricter than His earlier requirements, or His appeal become narrower in its range as the ages pass. Surely all those whom Christ would have welcomed ought to be welcomed now; those whom Christ would have refused, as they were, ought to be refused now. And to embody this principle negatively and positively, nothing is so serviceable as to reiterate and insist upon the primitive principle that no doctrine can be made into a dogmatic requirement of the Church, except what is really found implicitly at least in the New Testament—with its positive accompaniment that the Scriptures must be an open book for all the faithful, and the teaching of the Church, public and private, must be so permeated with Scripture, that what is unscriptural in spirit shall pass into instinctive reprobation. The Church ought to embark upon every new age or new region in "the power of the Spirit," expecting to find there much that is properly human and needs to be encouraged, and much that is properly inhuman and false and wicked and needs to be reproved. And the touchstone of fidelity to the Spirit, the touchstone for true discrimination, is—boldly be it said—in the New Testament and nowhere else.

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[1] "Quae pertinent ad fidem, quam paucissimis articulis absolvantur." See *Erasmus the Reformer*, by Mr. Elliott Binns (Methuen, 1923), and my *Dissertations*, pp. 179-180.

I have been seeking in these last chapters to present two contrasted types of authority—the Roman and the ancient—and to show reasons for preferring the latter. Now I must go on to contrast the ancient Catholic ideal with that of orthodox Protestantism, which, asserting the authority of "the Bible and the Bible only," would ignore the authority of tradition in the Church. After that I must endeavour to work out the old ideal in its modern application. But before the present subject is left behind, I want to go back upon the plea, which is so often appealingly made on behalf of Rome, that its peremptory idea of authority, backed by its effective regimental discipline, is what is best for the needs of the plain man. We of the Church of England often hear the complaint that, in our day of mental confusion and conflicting voices, and with our certainly scandalous lack of discipline, there is no certainty to be found by anxious souls except in the Church of Rome.

Whatever limited *apologia* can be made for the

Church of England shall be made later. Here I am only concerned with the plea that the particular kind of authority which is represented in the Church of Rome is what the ordinary good man needs to lift him out of the strife of tongues. But there are so many kinds of "plain men" and their requirements are so different. One of those most commonly met since the war is the man who is altogether 'offended' because God did not stop the war, or more largely, because a world, which is in so many ways godless and repulsive to our moral sense, is allowed to continue triumphant, as it seems, over the Kingdom of Heaven, or perhaps because in his own case God has seemed so cruel and unjust. Such men cannot bear the trial of Job, or believe in a "God who hideth himself," or "endure as seeing him who is invisible." So they reject, or bitterly criticize, the Christian faith as a whole.

Then there are others, and they also are a large crowd, whose complaint is not of the faith in its fundamentals, but of the Church because it is so untrue to Christ. Why has it not spoken up for justice? Why does it cringe to wealth? Why has it not protested with a unanimous voice against this or that plain outrage upon brotherhood? There is no satisfactory answer to these questions; for the answer that, throughout the Church, the purpose for which it is in the world has been in part forgotten or the sense of it distorted, and that we have to strive to restore in the Church the fuller sense of its vocation, is not satisfactory either to indignant complainants or to anyone to whom the honour of the Church is dear. Nevertheless we must refuse to lose the vision of the Church, as it stands in the purpose of Christ, even though in actual fact the divine image in her is sadly dimmed, and the divine life, as St. Augustine says, frost-bound. Here, too, we must endure as "seeing him who is invisible." The trial of our endurance comes in different ways to different people—through personal trials, or through the silences of God in the great world, or through the faults of the Church everywhere. But to none of these types of distressed souls does the Roman Church make any special appeal.

No doubt the Roman Church does make a special appeal to the particular disposition which craves simply the authoritative voice, and wants, in passive acceptance, to get rid of all personal responsibility for the truth. But I fancy this kind of spirit would have found our Lord a great trial when He was on earth, showing such reserve in providing plain answers to plain questions and leaving His would-be disciples so much to do for themselves. I fancy it would have found more satisfaction with the dogmatic Pharisee. Certainly in the early centuries of the Church in the East such a spirit would have found approximately the same trials as it does among ourselves to-day; for the theological confusion was appalling, and the decisions of bishops in council were bewildering in their contradictions; and indeed the bishops seemed to have lost all steadfastness, and to bend before the contrary winds of imperial tempers; and there were rival bishops in a number of sees; and an insufferable strife of tongues. No one who wished to say bitter things of the Church of England could find more bitter things than St. Basil and St. Hilary said truly of the Church of their time.[1] And they had no idea of any "way out" by centralizing authority and making it absolute. In fact, as historians have perceived, the "way out" was found in the main through the faithfulness of the laity, who persisted, on the whole, in holding fast both to the Godhead of Christ and to His manhood, though their vision also was distorted by the partisan loyalties of rival cities.

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[1] See for quotations *Roman Catholic Claims*, Appended Note, iii, p. 212.

Nevertheless the Church did emerge and the Catholic faith did subsist. And in our time plain men have no right to complain if a like trial befalls them.

The great leaders of the Eastern Church of old have been reckoned ever since their age as the Doctors of the Church; and through their days of wild confusion they argued from Scripture, and pointed to tradition, and appealed to reason, and encouraged to steadfastness; and never showed any disposition to seek a remedy in the claim of spiritual monarchy which was already beginning to make itself heard from Rome. We cannot choose for ourselves the particular form in which the trial of our faith is to make us perfect. It is a stern discipline for most of us to learn to "test all things and hold fast that which is good" and to become "in understanding grown-up men" and "spiritual men judging all things and themselves judged of none"; but this is the apostolic ideal for the common Christian to aim at. After all, the fundamental faith of the Church and the New Testament is fairly plain; and rooted and grounded in that, we can devote ourselves to living the life with courage and self-sacrifice, although there may remain many not unimportant questions, to find the answer to which we remain at a loss.

APPENDED NOTE (see p. 832)

DR. MACKINTOSH'S CRITICISM OF CHALCEDON

My excuse for returning at some length to the subject of the Chalcedonian formula is that when I wrote *Belief in Christ* I had not read Dr. H. R. Mackintosh's work on *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*,[1] and while this book is a masterly vindication of what is in the main the traditional doctrine of Christ's person, the doctrine of the Nicene

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[1] In the "Internat. Theol. Library," reff. to 3rd edition.

Creed, he finally pronounces the terms of the Chalcedonian formula to be unacceptable to the modern mind, and suggests the line on which they should be remodelled. His theological standing gives so much weight to his criticism that I am bound both to state it and to examine it.

The formula of Chalcedon is in part a summary of the decisions of the previous Councils, which came to be reckoned as ecumenical, of which the first was Nicaea. With regard to the Nicene decision, then, we find Dr. Mackintosh speaking with contempt of the Arian Christology which it condemned. He identifies himself with the statement that it is " dogmatically the most worthless of all the Christologies to be met with in history " (p. 178).

And neither on the ground of this particular controversy, nor anywhere else, will he tolerate any criticism of the action of the Councils, or of the writings of the theologians, on the pragmatist ground that " metaphysical explanations " or attempts at a " philosophical theory " of Christ's person are essentially futile. " No escape then is possible, in this field [i.e. the field of Christ's person] or any other, from the obligation to think things out persistently to the end " (p. 304). And further he gives a modified approval to the term *Homoousios*. " With the New Testament in our hands it is impossible not to acquiesce in his [Athanasius'] main conclusion. Even the word ' consubstantial,' so fiercely assailed both then and now, is but the assertion of the real deity of Christ in terms of the philosophy by which it had been denied " (p. 188).[1]

It was the right word, he means, for those times, but not for ours. For he suggests repeatedly that we have left behind the philosophy which speaks in terms of "substance." This is so important an argument, and, I believe, so mistaken, that I must quote several of Dr. Mackintosh's statements of it. After speaking of Greek sacramentalism as implying a "quasi-physical change in our essential manhood," he remarks (p. 323) that by such a conception "we are naturally led to define Christ's person in terms of substance, not spirit. For reasons which are both religious and psychological or philosophical, this is out of touch with the modern mind. But we are in accord with these great thinkers in the fundamental conviction which inspired them." Again (p. 334): "Substance was simply the category by which earlier thinkers strove to affirm the highest conceivable degree of reality; it was indeed their loftiest notion of God Himself. . . . But we have put aside the category substance, and construe the facts freshly in terms of personality. On the accepted principle of modern philosophy that there are degrees of reality, a personal union ought to be regarded as infinitely more real than a substantial one." Again (p. 416): "Others have insisted that behind the will and thought of Jesus stood a divine substance or nature, of which will and thought are but attributes, and which is somehow real apart from them. This, however, . . . has no meaning except on the assumption that substance as a category is higher than subject or intelligent conscious will—a view against which the history of philosophy since Kant has been one long and continuous protest. If we have learnt anything from the modern criticism of categories, it surely is that no category can be higher than personality or self-consciousness. For us then the proper inference is that the essential and noumenal divinity of Christ the Son ought to be formulated in conceptions other than substance or nature and the like, which really oppose the metaphysical aspect of Sonship to the ethical." Finally (p. 421), he speaks of the orthodox as "placing the reality of God not in His will and character but in an inscrutable and unethical substance."

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[1] Cf. " Not less for us to-day faith in God means faith in Jesus. In this naive and experimental sense it is not too much to say that the Godhead of Jesus is *de fide* for the Christian mind " (p. 288).

Now, I am far from denying that this unethical conception of substance is one into which Greek philosophy was liable to fall and which is to be found among Greek theologians. You feel this tendency in the thought of Apollinarius and St. Cyril of Alexandria and in the Monophysites and in John Damascene and in later Greek mystics like Nicholas Cabasilas. The Antiochenes, on the other hand, orthodox and unorthodox alike, were the freest from it, and the Cappadocians, I suppose, on the whole. But anyway, let Dr. Mackintosh repudiate with all his force any such conception of God as is open to this charge of being unethical. Let us cling to the three great definitions or metaphors, "God is light," "God is love," "God is spirit." But I think it can be shown that Dr. Mackintosh's crusade against the category of substance is a disastrous crusade which must be abandoned.

And, first, the Fathers used it simply to express "real being." To say that God is the supreme substance and Christ is of one substance with the Father means simply that God is the supreme reality, and that we say Christ is God in the sense that He belongs essentially to this eternally real being and not to that different kind of dependent being which belongs to creatures. But all kinds of creatures have real, though dependent, being. They are "substances" of different kinds, and in the process of the fourth and fifth centuries it was found so important to distinguish one particular kind of substance, viz. personality, from all others, that an old term, hitherto used indistinguishably from *substantia*, viz. *hypostasis*, was endowed with this special meaning "person," and henceforth *hypostasis* is a name for a special kind of *substance*. But it is really absurd to suggest that the theology of the Councils admits of "substance" being put into opposition to "person," or that "substantial" can be opposed to "ethical." Person was a subdivision of substance, having more content—according to Boethius's famous definition of person, "naturae rationalis individua substantia." This definition was only the summary expression of the terminology on which the Church had settled down.[1]

It is very easy to exaggerate the extent to which the Fathers of the Councils were acting *philosophically*. They simply wanted to say that Christ is really and fully God and really and completely man. The relation of the Father and the Son is different from the relation of one human being to another. Nevertheless there exist two kinds of reality—God and mankind; and the Fathers were content to say that Christ was consubstantial with God the Father as eternal Son and consubstantial with us men in the manhood which He assumed. They only used the best word they could find to describe the real being both of God and of man.

And as to the philosophical crusade against substance, Dr. Mackintosh must really be careful before he joins it. For it certainly imperils his fundamental position—I think I should say it undermines it. The authors of the crusade are pantheists like Spinoza, or are of the Hegelian school. They will acknowledge no substance but one, the Absolute.[2] That alone has reality. All so-called lower "substances" are more or less unreal. And the one thing that is "substantially real"—the Absolute—must somehow contain in itself all the variety of the universe. Thus the absolute cannot be personal, nor have a determinate will and character. And the unreality of material objects is shared by all personalities. Personality no more than material existence will bear examination. It is not real. And the whole idea of a personal God, the Creator of real things and persons, distinct from Himself, although dependent on Himself, is gone. This is the philosophy which, by the intolerable chaos which it produces in the minds of men, has stung its opponents into sarcasm from Mansel to Lord Balfour.[1] But I will appeal to one who would by no means wish to be regarded as an opponent of Hegelianism, Mr. C. J. Shebbeare, and ask Dr. Mackintosh to read an article of his in *Mind*,[2] in which he makes an urgent appeal to philosophers on behalf of the idea of substance in the sense of real thing. It is, in fact, necessary to retain the idea and the word, if there is not to be a hopeless conflict between philosophy and common sense—the kind of conflict in which philosophy always at last becomes negligible. Philosophy must interpret common sense, not contradict it. Also it is of paramount necessity for Christianity, which believes in God as the creator of persons and things which are real, to insist on retaining the category of substance or "real thing." Thus if it be necessary for the Church to affirm (as Dr. Mackintosh admits) that in worshipping the Son and the Spirit it does so only because they are really God—integral to the divine being—I do not know how that could be better affirmed than by the phrase *consubstantial*, all the more that now that phrase has behind it the tradition and reverence of 1,600 years, and no one could make any effective attempt to dislodge it without stirring the most determined resistance and producing a new and profound schism. Rather let us proclaim to all the winds of heaven that by "substance" the Church means no more and no less than

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[1] On the history of the meanings assigned to *οὐσία*, substantia, ὑπόστασις, persona, etc., see Professor Clement Webb, *God and Personality*, lecture ii.

[2] Or decline the idea of substance altogether.

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[1] See *Belief in God*, p. 222.

[2] Vol. xxxii, N.S., No. 127.

"real thing," so that when we speak of the Son and of the Spirit as "of one substance" with the Father, we mean that they belong to that one real being which we call God; and when we speak of Christ as of one substance with us, we mean that He took the real being of man, and is that real thing, in all respects, that a man is. Do not let us be hypercritical.

Passing now from Nicaea to Constantinople, we find of course that Dr. Mackintosh is thoroughly in accord with the rejection of the theory of Apollinarius, and of any theory that would maim or render unreal the manhood of Christ. But I do not think he is sufficiently impressed with the evidences of a divine guidance of the Church, leading it through all the period of the Councils to resist so firmly the decidedly Monophysite tendency of Alexandria, and to stand so jealously for the full reality, physical and spiritual, of the manhood of Christ.[1] Surely he should recognize that it was specially for the spiritual, and therefore ethical, reality of the humanity of Christ that they had to contend. Apollinarianism and Monophysitism were content enough to leave to Him a kind of quasi-human physical nature penetrated with the divine. What the Church demanded was the recognition that the true manhood of Christ, as indeed the true manhood of all of us, lies especially in its spirit, reason, and will. And though the second Council devised no new term, as far as we know, it made it necessary to fix a term to describe "all that properly belongs to manhood." And is there any better term to use for this purpose than "nature"? St. Paul had used "form" in practically this sense, and Chrysostom identifies the two words. But "the form of God" might have had a really materialistic meaning. Surely "nature" was better; and surely if we believe, in accordance with the fundamental requirements of common sense, that real objects exist in groups, distinguished by identity of qualities, we must speak of them as having the same nature.

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[1] Luther is quoted (p. 232) as insisting "that the Scriptures begin very gently and lead us on to Christ as to a man, and then to one who is Lord over all creatures, and after that to one who is God." This is no doubt the method suggested by the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts. Dr. Mackintosh puts it in contrast to the method of the Scholastics and many of the Fathers. But Luther's idea is also St. Chrysostom's. "Why," he asks, "does St. Paul (Rom. i. 3–4) not begin from the higher side? [i.e. why does he speak first of the human nature of Christ?] Because Matthew, also Luke and Mark, begin from the lower. One who would lead others upwards must begin from below. And this was in fact the divine method. First they saw Him [Christ] as man on the earth, and then perceived Him to be God." And other references could be given to the same effect.

This was the outcome of the second Council—to affirm of Christ the nature of man in all its spiritual and ethical completeness and to repudiate anything which denied this completeness.

The Church at this period exhibited no love of dogmatizing. But it was driven to it by the necessity for guarding the foundations of its religion. Arius and Macedonius and Apollinarius really imposed upon it this necessity. It would have been disastrous if the idea of Christ as a demigod, or of His humanity as a truncated humanity, had been tolerated, or if the Spirit had been regarded as a creature. So again it became really necessary to resist the tendencies of the Antiochene school, when they came to a head in the doctrine called Nestorian. Whatever may be said about Nestorius, Nestorianism was a reality. And we have Dr. Mackintosh with us in repudiating any conception which denies the eternal existence of the person of the Son, who, at a certain moment in time, became man.[1] The infant child of Mary who grew to be the man Christ Jesus was from the beginning of His human existence the divine person who "impoverished himself" to become like us and to be born of a woman. There is no doubt that this is the doctrine of St. Paul and St. John, and of the Nicene Creed. It is only this that the formula of Ephesus was set to protect. Let it be admitted that there were perils in Cyril's theology, as in fact soon appeared. Let us grant to the full that the Incarnation involved such self-limitation of the eternal Son as admitted of His becoming the subject of real human growth, not in body only but in mind; but it was the same "person," who eternally was as Son with the Father, who, thus pre-existing in the "form" of God, emptied Himself in taking the "form" of man.[1]

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[1] See p. 450. "In the N.T. the very signature of Christianity is the faith that the Divine Son passed from glory to humiliation"; and p. 453, "In a verse like 'though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor,' there is surely little or no significance unless the pre-existent One is a 'person,' a 'self,' in the usual connotation."

Then finally it became necessary at Chalcedon to complete the work of the second Council and to repudiate any theory which suggested that the manhood was so absorbed into the Godhead as to cease to be real.[2] Of course those who made the suggestion had no doubt as to the real Godhead of Jesus. Nor had the Fathers of Chalcedon. He had the "form" or nature of God. That belonged to Him essentially. But He took the created nature of man. So in the unity of one person there are two natures. That was the phraseology determined at Chalcedon. Dr. Mackintosh does not demur to the unity of the person, or to the affirmation of the full and permanent human nature. But he demurs to the affirmation of two natures in Christ. Not, indeed, that his language always points this way. "We cannot," he writes, "eliminate the duality. As it has been expressed: 'In several passages [of the Fourth Gospel] the contrast is expressly marked between the present revelation of Jesus as Son of man and the true glory of His divine nature. . . . The significance of the name [Son of God] in all these verses lies in the suggestion that the human nature of Christ was united with a higher nature which was present in it even now, and would at last become fully manifest.' This note of contrast seems never to fail."[1] Here Dr. Mackintosh approves of a quotation which affirms the two natures in Christ. So again he speaks of "the union of Godhead and manhood in His person."[2] And he writes with a certain cordiality of Chalcedon. "A clearly felt soteriological interest is behind the careful phrases, and enables us to interpret the whole as a combination of the vital elements which faith has always insisted on combining in its view of Christ the Saviour. Thus the reality and integrity of each nature, of Godhead and of manhood, is upheld: the incarnation has not issued in a being that is somehow neither divine nor human or either exclusively. . . . Thus the decisions of Chalcedon may reasonably be viewed as a great utterance of faith, aware of the wrong turnings that theory may take so easily. They have been well compared to buoys anchored along a difficult estuary, on the right and left, to guide the ship of truth. With the religion of the Creed accordingly we have no quarrel."[3]

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[1] I do not think Dr. Mackintosh is justified in saying roundly that St. Paul in Phil. ii. "describes our Lord as having abandoned the one mode of being (the divine 'form') for the other (the human 'form')." St. Paul is certainly not a precise logician in his use of terms. He speaks of Christ as "pre-existing in the form of God" and apparently as having the prerogatives which are described as τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, and then as having "emptied Himself" in taking the human "form." But he does not say precisely of what He emptied Himself. He did so so far as was necessary for really becoming man—that is all we can ascribe to St. Paul. He certainly did not cease to be Son of God. And he speaks of the cosmic functions of the Son (Col. i. 17, 18, and 1 Cor. viii. 6) as if they were perpetual.

[2] And again later in the sixth Council to affirm that in the abiding nature of man as it exists in Christ are included the human will and the whole human activity.

[1] p. 109. [2] p. 428. [3] p. 213.

That, one might have hoped, was enough. But Dr. Mackintosh cannot away with the phrase "the two natures." It involves the idea of "two consciousnesses and two wills. The New Testament indicates nothing of the kind, nor indeed is it congruous with an intelligible psychology."[1] "To return thus to a theoretic duality of mental life in our Lord, against which all modern Christology has been a protest, is surely to sin against light."[2] And he speaks of breaking up Christ's single person into two unrelated halves,[3] and he complains that "nature is not an ethical word at all,"[4] and he objects to the idea of an "impersonal manhood."

Now, let it be granted that the phrase an "impersonal manhood" is a very unfortunate one. It does not occur in the definition of Chalcedon. What it means is that there was no *independent* seat of personality in the manhood of Jesus, but that it found its personality in being taken by the Son.[5] That, I think, Dr. Mackintosh must admit. Christ throughout was the Son who is God. "It is very God Himself"[6] which constitutes Jesus our Redeemer. And Jesus is not two persons. Human nature, we recognize, is so akin to God that the Son can take human nature and become the real *ego* of the man, the real subject of all its affections and actions. Thus the man Christ is supremely and emphatically personal; and Scripture calls Him not only man but *a* man,[7] and postulates for Jesus, whom we believe to be the Son incarnate, a proper human development, spiritual and mental as well as physical. Also the Gospels certainly do not present us with the picture of a Christ with two juxta-posited natures, divine and human, acting now in one and now in another. That idea was customary in the theology of the fifth century, but it did not enter into the definition of the Council.

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[1] p. 470.

[2] p. 482.

[3] p. 492.

[4] p. 214: surely it is when applied to God and to man.

[5] This is what Leontius of Byzantium means by his phrase *enhypostasia*, which became through John of Damascus the orthodox phrase—"enhypostasia," not "anhypostasia."

[6] p. 411.

[7] Acts ii. 22: "Jesus of Nazareth, a man (ἄνδρα) designated of God," etc.

We must view the definition of the Council as what its origin shows it to have been (and Dr. Mackintosh recognizes it as having been), the outcome of negations —the necessary negations of ideas about Christ which would have been destructive to the Christian religion. The result of these negations is a positive framework within which the truth of Christian thought must lie. To quote the simile which rightly pleased Dr. Mackintosh, it marks out the right channel by warning Christians off perilous shoals and currents. But for the positive conception we go to the Gospels, and there we find a positive conception for which the dogmatic boundaries leave room, but which the theology of the period did not generally suggest—a positive picture which requires us to think of the eternal Son of God, within the scope and period of His mortal life, as living and acting under the limitations of a real humanity and from the human point of view. About that I have perhaps said enough in the second volume of this series and elsewhere. Certainly in this respect I find myself in sympathy with Dr. Mackintosh. But that picture in the Gospels requires, so it seems to me, the recognition, in the background, of the two natures and the two wills. Here is a human will obedient to the Father. But only a human will? No; if so, there would have been no redemption. It was " in eternal spirit " that Jesus offered Himself to the Father. The person who willed and the will of self-oblation by which He lived and died were more than human, or they would not have been redemptive. The dogma of the Council had for its object to guard the reality of the human will; but it took the underlying reality of the divine will for granted.

And the consciousness of Jesus, is it merely human? No; there is another element in it. A superhuman and divine consciousness shines out of the human organ, the consciousness which qualifies Him to say, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son," etc., and to speak with the inherent authority of God. True it is we cannot realize as from within the experience of Jesus in willing and knowing. We must be largely agnostic. We cannot form a psychology out of one example which we can only very imperfectly understand. But of one thing we can be sure. Here are fundamentally two natures, a divine and a human—two wills or consciousnesses, a divine and a human; and these "natures" are diverse: only by a supreme act of the divine sympathy the divine has so emptied itself of divine prerogatives as to be able to live and act in and through a human nature and human faculties.[1]

So there is, I feel convinced, no necessity why we should discard the venerable terminology of the Councils—if I add, "until we have a better," I should not be speaking in entire sincerity, for I do not believe the better will be forthcoming. And I am the more inclined thus to feel, because when Dr. Mackintosh advances from criticism to reconstruction, I do not think he is successful. I have not rarely found myself cross-questioned by an undoubted believer in our Lord who was at the same time sincerely puzzled as to what he or she should think about His person. And again and again I have found the definitions of the Councils, considered rightly as primarily negative, of the greatest help. And I have found the puzzled mind thereby--not satisfied, as if it could know all about an impenetrable mystery, but set at rest and made thankful, and able to read the Gospels with a fuller apprehension.

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[1] Not long ago at a meeting on behalf of reunion among Christians a well-known theologian of the Free Churches was heard to exclaim that "Schleiermacher had proved that a union of two natures in one person was an impossibility"; but we have much less confidence to-day in *a priori* logic than either the Greek Fathers had or the Schoolmen or the German philosophers of a generation or two back. The fact is that neither human nature by itself nor divine nature by itself can account for the Christ of history. And we all know that Schleiermacher's idea of God was much more akin to Spinoza's than to St. Paul's.

But I could not get this help from Dr. Mackintosh's suggested terminology. The essence of personality, he insists, is will. " Whether it be in God or man, it [the will] is the last home of essential being." It is enough therefore that Christ should be one with God *in will* (pp. 113 f.). And this is what the Gospels disclose. The will of the Man (Jesus Christ) is identical with the will of God (p. 304). And to affirm this is to affirm " in ethical terms, the highest terms available, . . . His ontological unity with God, in a sense generically different from that which is predicable of man as man." Now, what we read of in the Gospels is the human will of Jesus moving in perfect unity with the will of the Father. Surely the Council was right in affirming so strenuously that He had a human will. But is this all ? Is all we have to think of the human will of Jesus and the will of the Father ? Dr. Mackintosh cannot, does not, mean this. The human faculty of willing in Jesus came into existence when He became man. But there was another will-power, older than the human being of Christ, the divine will of the eternal Son—the will of Him who, not yet incarnate, emptied Himself, impoverished Himself, to be made man, and to " learn obedience " under conditions of human nature. True, this will of the eternal Son, when incarnate, acts under conditions of the humanity, and therefore of the human will-power which He had assumed. But the will of Jesus is still the will of the eternal Son, though acting in and through a human will. Again, the consciousness of Jesus in His human life is the consciousness of the Man; but behind it is an older consciousness—that of the eternal Son who has temporarily condescended to act under conditions of a human mind. And I cannot gain or keep a true thought of Jesus Christ unless I have always in mind that the willing and knowing and acting of the Man was not merely human, but had for its substratum the willing and knowing and acting of the eternal Son. I cannot get away from the necessity for recognizing that fundamentally there are here two wills, two consciousnesses, two natures, though the greater will and consciousness and nature are acting under the conditions of the lesser, within the sphere of the incarnate and mortal life.

To sum up: 1. It was necessary for the Church to repudiate the teaching of certain heresiarchs, if it was to retain the substance of its gospel; and the primary aim of the conciliar definitions is to say "no" to these fundamental errors.

2. But in repudiating these errors the Church built up a certain framework of thought within which the current of men's thoughts and feelings about Christ and the Holy Spirit should move. This framework cannot be bettered—that is to say, we cannot dispense with the ideas of "substance," "nature," and "person," or deny that in Christ we worship one person who, as incarnate, has fundamentally two natures.

3. But for our positive conception of Christ we are constantly to go back upon the Gospels; and the theology of the period of the Councils (as distinct from the dogmatic definitions) has, like the theological thinking of every period, its characteristic defects. The study of the Gospels forces us to recognize that in the Incarnate we have not two, simply juxtaposited, natures and wills and consciousnesses; but

that the Divine Son during the period of His mortal life so fully accepted the limitations of humanity as to act under the conditions of human willing and knowing. Still fundamentally we are also forced to recognize that what is presented to us is not only humanity and human energy, but there is also the divine energy, "eternal spirit," living and acting under the human conditions.

I cannot leave the consideration of Dr. Mackintosh's great work without again expressing my admiration for it in its main drift and arguments. It is only on a single point that I have ventured to be critical.

I have just read Dr. W. A. Wigram's *Separation of the Monophysites* (Faith Press, 1923), in which he pleads very earnestly (chap. xiv) that the nominally Monophysite Churches of to-day, who reject Eutyches and affirm the permanent reality of two "substances," divine and human, in the incarnate person, should not be required formally to accept the definition of Chalcedon with its term "two natures," but that the Orthodox Churches and ourselves should be satisfied with their acceptance, which they are willing to give, of the Christological clauses of the *Quicunque Vult*, wherein the "two substances" are affirmed and which are identical in meaning with Chalcedon. I hope that this proposal will be met in the friendly spirit of Athanasius towards those who "mean what we mean, and dispute only about the word" (*de Synod.*, c. 41).

CHAPTER VIII

THE AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

No doubt can be rightly raised that the Fathers of the Christian Church did see in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments together "the word of God"—documents, therefore, of unique authority as the final testing-ground of doctrine, theological and moral, for every age of the Church; and also there is no doubt that they justified the assignment of this unique position to the Holy Scriptures by claiming for their writers a plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit such as was claimed for no others.[1] Of course it was some time before the canon of the New Testament was settled. But before that had occurred, the words of Christ and the teaching of the Apostles had a final authority attributed to them; and during the process of defining the canon, the question whether any particular book was to be included appears to have been *generally* identified with the question whether it really was the work of an apostle or of the companion of an apostle, whose name it bore or to whom it was attributed.[1] Thus it is a matter of constant assumption that the standard of sound doctrine, to which the Church must always conform, is to be found in the Old Testament as supplying the foundation on which the Church is built, and in the New Testament as containing the teaching of the apostles, who were commissioned to deliver the faith in its fullness once for all.

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[1] See on this above, p. 793, where a few quotations are given and further references. But I may refer here to a luminous passage in St. Augustine's *de Bapt. c. Donat.*, i, 4 f., where he is arguing with the Donatists who appealed in justification of their schism to the authority of St. Cyprian. To this appeal Augustine makes a threefold reply. First, he exalts the supreme authority of Scripture. "Who is ignorant that the canonical Holy Scripture, both of the Old and New Testaments, is contained within its own definite boundaries, and is so superior to all later writings of bishops that no doubt or discussion can arise whether anything written there is true or right?" Secondly, he declares the writings of individual bishops to be subject to the criticism of others, whether individually made or in councils, and he subjects local councils to "plenary" or ecumenical, and earlier councils, even ecumenical, to later; "for the earlier are often corrected by the later, when by some evidence or experience [*experimento rerum*] what was hidden comes to light and what was unknown to knowledge." Lastly, he denies their right to appeal to Cyprian, who behaved so differently from them.

But it is obviously a very different and a very exciting question whether such a claim for Scripture can be maintained to-day. And the question, if we come to look at it closely, appears to be not one but manifold: (1) Does the Bible, and especially does the New Testament, contain in fact one consistent doctrine? (2) Can we reasonably maintain the finality of the apostolic interpretation of Christ? (3) Can we deny that tradition, independently of "Scripture," may have handed down their teaching and be necessary to supplement it? (4) Can we still ascribe to the writers of the Bible such a unique inspiration as the ancients did, and what is the meaning of this inspiration? (5) Is the position reasonable which, affirming the finality and completeness of the New Testament doctrine, still demands that the tradition of the Church be appealed to to interpret it? These questions, obviously coming from very different quarters, are all important, and we must consider them all. If I do not include the question about the *limits* of the canon it is because in this book nothing is made to turn on whether Ecclesiastes should be inside and Ecclesiasticus outside, or whether 2 Peter is not wrongly included as the work of St. Peter.

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[1] Thus the work of no later teacher, Clement or Ignatius or Hermas, was admitted; and the admission of the Epistle to the Hebrews meant its attribution to St. Paul or to St. Barnabas or one of the apostolic company. Eusebius seems to take it for granted that if the apostle John did not write the Apocalypse, it would fall out of the list of "acknowledged" books and be reckoned among the "spurious" (*Eccl. Hist.*, iii, 5); but see Sanday, *Inspiration*, p. 52, who quotes an (unusual) opinion of Jerome that "it does not matter who is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as in any case it is the work of a church writer, and is daily read out in the churches" (*Ep. ad Dardanum*, cxxix, *P.L.*, xxiii, 1103).

I

Is then the claim that the Bible is so consistent in doctrine that it can be spoken of as conveying to us one "word of God" in the different stages of its delivery a really tenable claim to-day? The first volume of this series was largely occupied with the contention that, whatever changes historical science has recently rendered necessary in the conception of the Old Testament, it has in no way invalidated or even weakened its central claim to be the record of a real self-disclosure made by the living God to the people of Israel through the prophets. There is there presented to us a progressive and continuous doctrine about God and man, and a continuous anticipation, in which lies the predictive aspect of prophecy,[1] that the self-revelation of God was to find one day a climax and fulfilment. It is this prophetic doctrine alone which gives its special value and meaning to the Old Testament. And it is a matter of fact that Jesus of Nazareth presented Himself to men finally as the Christ—the consummation of the Old Testament revelation—and it is upon the basis of the Old Testament that our Lord and His apostles and the whole Christian Church after Him have taken their stand. I will not labour this point any more.

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[1] We are not, as will be contended below, bound to accept all the particular fulfilments of prophecy which the first Christians discovered; but some modern authors repudiate their interpretation of prophecy in general, as I think, unreasonably. See above, Appended Note A, p. 684.

But leaving now the Old Testament for the New, we find a number of modern critics denying the unity of doctrine in the New Testament which the Church has found there. Jesus Christ, it is suggested, never did in historical fact make any claim to Godhead, or to divine sonship, other than what belonged in idea to Israel in the Old Testament, or than belongs to every one of the sons of men, if he will have it so. The passages in the Synoptic Gospels which appear so plainly to imply a unique and essential divine sonship are explained away, or regarded as unauthentic, and the witness of the Fourth Gospel to the divine claim of Jesus is denied any historical value. The authority exercised by Christ is reduced to the prophetic type. The phraseology of the institution of the eucharist, which implies a Christ who is to impart His own sacrificed humanity to His people and to be their spiritual food, is declared unauthentic. The whole idea of the sacramental Church is ascribed to the influence of the Hellenistic mysteries. Then the belief of the first church at Jerusalem is explained as purely the Jewish apocalyptic belief transferred to Jesus. Even in St. Paul the conception of the incarnation of an eternal Son is not really to be found—only the supposed Jewish conception of the archetypal heavenly man or pre-existing Messiah, who is neither really divine nor solidly human. Out of this Jewish imagination, coupled with the conception of the Wisdom of God, operative in creation, St. Paul fashions his doctrine of Christ; who is to him always the glorified Christ and is identified with the Spirit. There is not to be found in St. Paul really the doctrine of a personal Spirit distinct from the Son. Only later in the Fourth Gospel is there any real conception of the incarnation of God in Jesus and of the personality of the Spirit. Thus the New Testament contains not one doctrine of Christ but three or four—the purely human or prophetic, the "adoptionist," the conception of the pre-existent man or Christ manifested on earth, and the doctrine of incarnation properly so called—and not one doctrine of the Spirit of God, but two. What has been central and fundamental in the theology of the Church, the doctrine of the Nicene Creed, is not in any way to be ascribed to Jesus Himself, nor to His first disciples, nor even really to St. Paul.

Now, in the second volume of this series and in the earlier chapters of this volume an attempt has been made to examine this set of ideas—which of course is presented by different critics in varying versions and with varying emphasis, but with a substantial identity of tendency—with real freedom of mind. And if any examination is to be free, we must not allow ourselves at starting to be so much impregnated with the atmosphere of current criticism as to lose the power of thinking for ourselves. Granted this freedom of mind, certain conclusions seemed to be fairly certain: (1) That no merely human measure will fit the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels, who certainly so presented Himself to His disciples as to come to have for them really the 'value' of God; and who certainly from time to time spoke of Himself as Son of God in some quite superhuman sense. (2) That St. Paul's testimony gives to the account of the institution of the eucharist historical value which cannot be ignored. (3) That though it is true the disciples were at first, after losing their risen Master from sight, so preoccupied with His glory, and then with the presence of the Spirit whom He had sent down upon them, as to feel no necessity to give account of His person, yet they treated Him, and called upon His name, as a properly divine being. (4) That when St. Paul interpreted His person, it was with a doctrine of the incarnation of the pre-existent Son of God—not of a pre-existent Messiah or heavenly man—a Son of God whom He co-ordinates with God and even calls God. (5) That this doctrine, afterwards confirmed and fortified by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the writer whom the Church has called John the apostle, prevailed without rival and without controversy—there is no "adoptionist" or other theory to be found in the New Testament. (6) That the Spirit is not by St. Paul, any more than in the Fourth Gospel. identified with Christ, though He is inseparably united with Him. And (7) that the institution of the Church and of certain sacraments must historically be attributed to Christ Himself. On all these points I do not ask for an unhesitating or uncritical verdict, but for a verdict in accordance with the evidence. And we have good reason for insisting on the necessity of freeing ourselves from contemporary prejudices. Dr. J. M. Wilson is a scholar whom we should not accuse of undue conservatism, but after speaking, in a recent book, of the effect on some writers of an *a priori* conviction that the supernatural cannot be true, he adds a warning which, I think, is needed. "It seems to me that some critics, to whom it would be absurd to attribute any such prepossessions, are so anxious not to allow themselves to be prejudiced in the opposite sense that they underestimate the obvious and clear arguments." [1]

If the conclusions just summarized, without being re-argued, are sound, then we have answered our first question. The Church was justified in appealing to the New Testament as to a book of many authors, presenting no doubt a variety of points of view and distinctions of emphasis, but presenting also really one doctrine, and not several—one doctrine gradually arrived at under the leadership of St. Paul, but the only one which really interprets certain authentic words of Christ and the whole impression He made on His disciples.

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[1] *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 33 (S.P.C.K., 1923). The general warning quoted above is separable from its particular application to Blass's view of the 'Western' text of the Acts. See also Appended Note A on Dr. A. H. McNeile's *New Testament Teaching*, p. 898.

II

In seeking to answer the second question as to the reasonableness of ascribing finality to the apostolic interpretation of Christ's person, as we find it in St. Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews and in St. John, we are still treading on ground already traversed.[1] If Christ is rightly interpreted in these documents—if no different interpretation can do justice to the fact of Christ—then the Christ so interpreted is essentially final. There can be no conception of God fuller or completer, given under the conditions of this world, than is given in Him in whom the Word is made flesh, and no union of manhood with Godhead fuller than is given in Him in whom "flesh," that is, human nature in all its faculties and progressive development, is the very organ of God. The resistance to this idea of finality comes from a desire to maintain a somewhat abstract belief in evolution, which implies that the past can never be the best. But we are learning that the abstract idea of evolution must submit itself to the facts.[2] It is a fact that the personality of Christ is so unique that nothing can account for it but the belief that in the process of history, at a certain moment and in a certain historical person, the Absolute once for all manifested itself under conditions of time. Here is something in history which is supra-historical—towards which and from which all history, so far as it is religious history, must move and in which it must find its centre. The belief that this is so is what has been the strength of the Christian view of the world. As F. D. Maurice said[1]: "A clergyman" (let us say "a Christian"), "it seems to me, should be better able than other men to cast aside that which is merely accidental either in his own character or in the character of the age to which he belongs, and to apprehend that which is essential and eternal. His acceptance of fixed creeds (it would suffice to say 'the apostolic interpretation of Christ's person'), which belong as much to one generation as another, and which have survived amidst all changes and convulsions, should raise him especially above the temptation to exalt the fashion of his own time, or of any past one; above the affectation of the obsolete, above slavery to the present, and above that strange mixture of both which some display, who weep because the beautiful visions of the past are departed, and admire themselves for being able to weep over them—and dispense with them."

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[1] *Belief in Christ*, chap. vi, pp. 611–15.

[2] Cf. Dr. H. R. Mackintosh, *The Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 309 (Edinburgh, 2nd ed., 1913): "If it be said the Gospel as involved in history must consent to be equally relative with other facts of

Of course we must never forget that the apostolic interpretation of Christ really quickens and inspires

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the time series—that it has to choose, in short, between historicity and finality—the answer is that this is pure assumption, and assumption which must be changed if it conflicts with real phenomena. It may well be even bad metaphysics." See also p. 356: "It betrays a disabling bondage to *a priori* dogma, none the less hurtful that it is unorthodox, when men approach a stupendous problem with the tacit understanding that no results can be accepted which fail to conform to a fixed standard."

[1] Preface to Kingsley's drama *The Saint's Tragedy* (1849), see Kingsley's *Poems*, p. xvii (Macmillan, 1902).

religious development in mankind and does not dispense with it. It must take the whole of converted humanity with all its variety of gifts to show the full meaning of Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"; and only so can Christ be fulfilled in the Church. Nevertheless He is perfect and complete in His own person from the first, and the interpretation of His person which alone secures this must be final.[1] And it was so regarded from the first. Clement of Rome and Ignatius of Antioch, in sub-apostolic days, already look back upon the apostolic doctrine as formative and authoritative, almost before the collection of the canon of the New Testament was begun, just as Athanasius and Augustine do when it was practically settled. And in fact no one who is acquainted with the New Testament books and then sets himself to read those—such as Hermas or Justin Martyr—who in the second century with the best intentions sought to interpret Christ, can do so without feeling that he has come down to a much lower level of understanding and surefootedness.

III

But a curious question remains—whether the ancient Church was right in elevating the written books of the New Testament to a throne of solitary supremacy. Plainly our Lord resolved to entrust His gospel to men, not to written books, and He Himself wrote nothing. Then, when the books of the New Testament were written, many of them appear to be markedly occasional, and none of them shows the intention of giving a connected account of Christian doctrine. Why then should not there be valuable parts of the apostolic teaching which were only handed down in ' unwritten tradition ' ? This, we know, is the theory of the Roman Church, which regards the Scriptures as only the chief source of the apostolic tradition. It requires supplementing by what was unwritten. And this idea of an unwritten tradition has in effect been used to render the whole appeal to Scripture and antiquity null and void. The living voice of the Church at any period, once established, *is* tradition, and must be assumed to have always been so. But this is to give to the idea of tradition a sense akin to the Gnostic idea of a secret tradition. The Fathers totally rejected this idea and countered it with the idea of an open tradition secured in the successions of the bishops. This tradition was in fact only for a little while 'unwritten.' It is written down in detail by Origen and less explicitly by Irenaeus. It was ' unwritten ' (*agraphos*) only in the sense that it was not scripture (*graphé*). Thus we do know what the Church ' tradition ' was from the second century, and we can boldly say that there was nothing of any doctrinal importance [1] in the tradition, and especially nothing which there was any tendency to make into a dogmatic requirement, except what is in Scripture. The Fathers are quite emphatic in giving to the tradition only an interpretative value.

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[1] I would refer to an illuminating article by the Rev. Richard Hanson entitled "History and the Historic Jesus," in the *Church Quarterly* of April 1923; see e.g. p. 100: "Christianity is the proclamation of a presence in history which is at once historic in that it appeared in time, and unhistoric in that it, by hypothesis, dominates and controls and gives an absolute value to history."

Perhaps we might be disposed to argue that—granted that in Christ was uttered really the final word of God to man, which is to stand as His message or Gospel through all ages—it seems impossible to imagine that God would not have " devised means " to secure that the message should be delivered with sufficient fullness and plainness by its first commissioned messengers and in such form that it should be accessible for constant reference. But we distrust such *a priori* arguments from the fitness of things. It is better to be content with the facts ; and the fact is that there is nothing of importance, as *doctrine*, which can make a plausible claim to have been in the original tradition which is not also, plainly implicit at least, in the written books.

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[1] See Appended Note B, p. 000, for an interpretation of this qualification.

IV

Now there arises a very large question, which no book attempting to treat of the Holy Spirit in the Church can ignore—what do we to-day believe about the *inspiration* of those sacred books of the Old and of the New Testament to which, as we have seen, the Church assigned so sovereign an authority ?

For the ascription by the Church of authority to the books was, we know, due to, or accompanied by, a belief that they were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that they brought with them for this reason a divine guarantee of trustworthiness. This root conviction has expressed itself in the doctrine that every book and every sentence of the Bible is infallibly true—a doctrine which has prevailed alike among Catholics and Protestants. But the whole historical and critical world has risen up in arms against this conception and declared it impossible ; and in describing at the beginning of these volumes the root causes of present-day unsettlement in matters of religious belief, I had of course to give a very large place to this cause.[1] Now, the whole purpose of these volumes has been to build up a constructive doctrine of God and Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Church without using the books of the Bible except as historical documents. Nothing has been said about them as if they were authoritative, because the subjects of a plenary inspiration. But we are now in a position from which the truth of Christianity, and its authority as the word of God, can be taken for granted. And its authoritativeness is so inseparable from the belief in the inspiration of Scripture that we must seek to determine what we mean by it and how it is to affect us.

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[1] *Belief in God*, pp. 13 ff.

The belief of the Christian Church in inspiration of course had its ground in the belief in the inspiration of the Old Testament which they inherited from the Jews. And this we are glad to find was primarily a belief in the inspiration of *prophets*, including Moses as the greatest and most creative of all. The evidence of this is to be found in the fact that no book was admitted into the Jewish canon which was believed to have been written after the time when the unbroken line of prophets ceased.[1] The value of this idea as evidence is quite independent of whether all the books of the Old Testament were in fact written before the line of prophets ceased and the Jews were left with only wise men. The idea is that the *prophet* is the inspired man. And we can notice at once that Philo's [2] identification of inspiration, in the highest sense, with the annihilation or expulsion of the human faculties of thought and reason—so that the inspired man is the purely passive instrument of the Divine Spirit, which dictates through him—does not at all correspond to the facts about the higher prophets of Israel and was never the view entertained by the Christian Church.[3] It was in fact derived from Greece and not from Israel. Those whom we name "the prophets" are occasionally represented as falling into trances, but this is rare, and even so they retain to the full their consciousness and individuality.

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[1] For the evidence of this see Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 110 ff. (Longmans, 1893)—surely an admirable book. The date suggested for the last of the prophets is that of Artaxerxes Longimanus, i.e. the date of the Book of Esther.

[2] For quotations see Sanday, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[3] See *Belief in God*, p. 87, n. 3.

And the modern critical view of the Old Testament would lead us to see in the prophetic teaching the key to the whole. The traditional law of the *cultus* of Jehovah and the whole social law, in their final form, were permeated with the prophetic spirit. So were the histories. So was the Wisdom literature. So were the Psalms. It would appear that the Song of Songs was only suffered to be within the canon because it was interpreted mystically of God and His Church as husband and wife, which is a recurrent note of prophecy[1]; and Ecclesiastes only because, as the book stands, that doubting, pessimistic spirit is led back finally to the fundamental Jewish loyalty. "This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard: fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." The spirit of prophecy thus permeates the whole literature of the Old Testament. That the prophets were really commissioned messengers of the word of God and really "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" we accept with enthusiastic assent; and every book of the Old Testament, whether we accept the stricter Hebrew canon, or include the books which appear in the Greek Bible, which we call 'apocryphal,' partakes of the inspiration of the prophets in varying degrees. We may boldly say that the doctrine of the inspiration of the Old Testament stands as surely to-day as of old, in spite of changed views as to the character of the literature and the dates of its books. The Old Testament *is* not the word of God in the sense that everything there narrated as history is historically correct, or that we can isolate any particular text and say, "This is an infallible utterance of God"; but it *conveys to us*, in a variety of books of different kinds, one moral and spiritual message, really inspired by the Spirit of God, who both "spake by the prophets" and also penetrated through the whole assemblage of books.

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[1] Hastings's *Dict. of the Bible*, iv, p. 589.

No doubt the Jewish rabbis of our Lord's time held a strict doctrine of the infallibility of the sacred books in all their details. And their exegesis was already minute and, as we should feel, irrational and intensely literalist. But one of the most impressive facts about our Lord's teaching was that there was nothing of this spirit in His appeal to Scripture. We recognize there "the sovereign breadth of view and deep penetration of insight by which the Founder and Master of our faith was enabled to seize the spirit of the Old Testament legislation and to ensure that even the letter . . . shall be observed more effectively than it had been by striking down to the root of motive which the law could not reach."[1] He is indeed recorded[2] to have taught His disciples that "till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished," and to have bidden them be strict Jews and not lax Jews, in preparation for the Kingdom. But already the hour of accomplishment had struck. "The law and the prophets were until John: from that time the gospel of the Kingdom of God is preached." And that gospel was profoundly disturbing to the tradition. It did not indeed destroy the law, but it fulfilled it by transmuting it into a new energy of the Spirit, which would proceed by a quite different method from that of minute enactments. Nothing, I think, is less justified on the whole than to represent our Lord as accepting the current Jewish interpretation of the meaning of inspiration, however true it is that it returned in great measure upon the Church in later days.

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[1] Sanday, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

[2] Matt. v. 18, 19; cf. Luke xvi. 17 and note the differences.

It must be accepted as a fact that in dealing with the books of Scripture our Lord used the language and knowledge of the time, and showed, at least, no signs of transcending it ; just as He showed no signs of transcending the knowledge of nature which belonged to His age or country. That He should have done otherwise would have contradicted the whole manifest intention of Divine providence that men should only acquire for themselves by infinite pains the knowledge which is within their grasp. But I do not think it can be fairly urged that our Lord fixed upon us, whether about nature or about Jewish literature, the yoke of first-century knowledge. His teaching about God and man and the Kingdom of God is quite independent of any particular stage of mental development and human science. There must have been in our Lord's mind a world of ordinary "knowledge" which He shared with His contemporaries, by the use of which alone He could speak intelligibly to them, which was part of the furniture and limitation of His real humanity ; but this He did not teach. The only teaching which He gave, and gave with the note of infallible certitude, was drawn from a profounder and eternal source. On the only two occasions on which our Lord's argument appears to depend on either a question of authorship or the verbal authority of a text, the context makes it natural to suppose that He was only impressing on a certain group of objectors the duty of consistency in their arguments.[1] He was not giving any positive teaching at all.[2]

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[1] I am referring to Mark xii. 35 and John x. 34–6. I have argued the matter in *Belief in Christ*, pp. 482–3, 487–9. See also on both passages Sanday, *op. cit.*, pp. 408–9, 417, 419, 483.

[2] Our Lord undoubtedly *taught* that the Old Testament Scriptures anticipated a suffering and dying Christ. If it were the case that no such prophesying can be found really in the Old Testament, it would be a very serious matter. But the case is not so : see above, p. 684.

When we turn from our Lord's teaching to that of the apostles and their companions, we are impressed with their prophetic insight into the real meaning of the Old Testament. Thus their moral teaching is the real flower of Old Testament morality. And St. Paul does really understand both the value of the law and its limitations. It was a preparation for the Spirit. It was to end in something not national but catholic. The doctrine of redemption and glory through humiliation, suffering, and death, which all the New Testament writers ascribe to the Old Testament, was a real note in the prophetic teaching which it was moral blindness to have overlooked. And the Epistle to the Hebrews is right about the sacrificial system. It was really essentially futile. "The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin." But it corresponded to something so deep in human need that it demanded an equivalent on a higher spiritual plane. Thus Christ really was the end of the law and the Church of the New Covenant the fulfilment of the Old. By comparison with the Rabbis the understanding of the meaning of the inspiration of the Old Testament shown by the New Testament writers is as light to darkness.

And the general account which they give of its inspiration is as acceptable to-day as it ever was. "The gospel of God, which he promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures." "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners." "To him bear all the prophets witness." "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace which should come upon you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories which should follow them."[1]

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[1] Rom. i. 2; Heb. i. 1; Acts x. 43; 1 Pet. i. 10–11.

"No prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost." "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holy place hath not yet been made manifest, while as the first tabernacle is yet standing; which is a parable for the time now present." "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope." "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."[1]

But when we pass from the general interpretation of the Old Testament to the interpretation of particular texts by the first teachers of the Church, there is something different which has to be said in a considerable number of instances. Their minds were full of the interpretations of prophecies—"Thus it must have been, for so it was foretold"; thus it happened "that the scripture might be fulfilled which said"—and we feel again and again that we cannot recognize in the original text from the Old Testament which is cited, any prophecy demanding such a fulfilment.[2] We can cordially accept their general principle, viz. that the Old Testament as a whole anticipates and demands a climax or fulfilment in the future, and that this climax or fulfilment is really found in Christ, but their method of argument from particular texts belongs to their time and is quite superseded.

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[1] 2 Pet. i. 20–1; Heb. ix. 8; Rom. xv. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 16–17.

[2] Such instances are fairly frequent in St. Matthew, e.g. ii. 15–18; and in him we find three or four cases where the supposed prediction is apparently allowed to modify the details of the record of fulfilment, e.g. Matt. xxi. 2 (the introduction of the ass beside the colt), xxvii. 3–10 (the introduction of the precise sum given, "thirty pieces of silver"), 34 (the gall). In Acts ii. 25 ff. the argument from the psalm is very precise as to the mind of David in writing it (cf. xiii. 35) and we cannot feel sure of the authorship, or feel that the original justifies the assumption that the psalmist is speaking *in persona Messiae*. Again, St. Paul's arguments from particular texts, as in Gal. iii. 13 and 16, Rom. iii. 10–18 and ix. 25, are, we feel, merely verbal and in no way borne out by the original context. See Dr. Strong's *Place of Scripture in the Church*, p. 38 (1917).

Here, however, we have passed from the inspiration of the Old Testament to the inspiration of the New Testament writers.

The most direct and definite claim to the plenary inspiration of the prophet, both in general and in detail, that is to be found in the New Testament, is that of John, the Seer of the Apocalypse (whether he be John the Evangelist or another); and I think that in that wonderful book we do see as vividly as anywhere the real effect of inspiration and its limits. John was really inspired to read the signs of the times and to see the meaning and issue of the conflict between the Empire and the Church, and to deliver to the terrified Christians the true message of encouragement. The visions are none the less real visions of God because the scenery is so plainly supplied by the mental furniture of the seer. It is a real foretaste of what must be, because God is God; but it is very far from being "history written beforehand," and those who have sought to interpret its mystical numbers in terms of historical years or temporal duration have gone utterly astray. We have not any reason to suppose that, if the seer, instead of giving us his successive visions, had endeavoured in cold prose to write down what he anticipated the course of historical events would be, he would have been found to be supernaturally enlightened, any more than the older prophets, except as to the meaning and issue of the struggle.

For the New Testament conception of the inspiration of an apostle we turn to St. Paul. He, no doubt, regarded the apostles, and the prophets who ranked with them or after them, as inspired.[1] Their inspiration is the greatest of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Accordingly St. Paul regards his message as a direct and personal revelation of God,[2] though for the facts concerning Christ he appeals not to revelation but to the tradition received,[3] and sometimes he appeals to words of Christ as of final authority. But we notice that he regards the authoritative teaching as once for all received, so that he had no authority to alter it or add to it.[4] If he received subsequent "revelations," they were "unutterable."[5] And while he clearly claims divine authority for his message, and that of the apostles generally, he claims no special inspiration to write, and no infallibility for judgements expressed which are not covered by his gospel or for which he has no "word of the Lord" to rely upon. For instance, in regard to marriage he distinguishes sharply between the word of the Lord pronouncing the indissolubility of the marriage bond, and his own opinion on points of difficulty, which he gives not as the word of God, but as the judgement of one who has been found faithful, or "I think I also have the Spirit of God."[6] In respect of women's headdress he claims peremptorily that the discipline of the Church should be accepted obediently.[7] But he would not claim that a direct personal inspiration of God is to be found in his arguments. Again, with regard to the ministries to be allowed to women, St. Paul would certainly claim that women must accept the discipline of the Church, whatever it is[8]; and he would claim that the subordination of women to men was a divine law running through life as a whole. But I see no reason to believe that he would have us claim perpetuity for his particular enactments, whether against the ordination of men twice-married or teaching by women. Certainly he *would* claim perpetuity for the principle that all alike, women and men, must accept the discipline of the Church.

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[1] 1 Cor. xii. 29. The point is the variety of spiritual gifts in the one body; cf. Eph. iv. 8–12.

[2] Gal. i. 12.

[3] 1 Cor. xv. 1–11, xi. 23 ff.

[4] Gal. i. 8–9.

[5] 2 Cor. xii. 1–4—that is to say, they did not affect his message to the Church.

[6] 1 Cor. vii. 10–12, 25, 40.

[7] 1 Cor. xi. 2, 16.

[8] 1 Cor. xiv. 34–36.

We are pleased to see that, like St. Paul, so the apostles from the beginning, and the historians of the New Testament, appeal for their facts not to inspiration, but purely and simply to evidence, the evidence of eye-witnesses.[1] And, if we may judge from the indications of St. Luke's preface, and St. John's manner of correcting tacitly mistakes in the Synoptic tradition, there was no strict infallibility assigned to the records, when they were written.[2]

When we pass from the New Testament into the records of the Church, we note two things. First, that as the canon of the New Testament forms itself by the selection of the Four Gospels, and the letters of Paul, and then of the rest of the documents, the same inspiration which was claimed for the Old Testament books was claimed, and rightly, for the New. Inspiration under the New Covenant was indeed something fuller and completer than inspiration under the Old; and the Church could not doubt, any more than we can doubt, that a real inspiration guided the Evangelists and the author of the Acts, though they claimed only the best information. But we note, secondly, that as for the Old Testament so for the New, the Christian Church *on the whole* took over from the Jewish schools an idea of inspiration which made it coincident with infallibility and completeness of knowledge.[3] Thus the tradition equating inspiration with infallibility is primitive in the Christian Church and pre-Christian, in fact. This is to us moderns utterly unacceptable. We are sure that there is in the Old Testament, besides a great deal of very good history, also a good deal of legend and of "history as it ought to have been"; and that though the same Christ is presented in all the Gospels, yet there are many divergences of detail, both as regards the words and works of Christ, even among the Synoptists, and no infallibility in their use of Old Testament texts. By this we must stand.

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[1] Luke i. 1–3; Acts i. 1–3 and 21, 22; 1 John i. 1–2.

[2] But it is in the Fourth Gospel regarded as a special function of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the Twelve to quicken their memory of the teaching of Jesus (John xiv. 26).

[3] For quotations, see Sanday, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 ff.

And we would call attention to two points. First, that there are a good many signs of the "modern" spirit in individual Fathers and even in whole schools. Thus there is a widespread belief that the early chapters of Genesis were allegory or picture-writing and not history.[1] Again, the depreciation of the sacrificial system of the Jews has quite a tradition. It is asserted to be something which God tolerated, but did not ordain. It was in its origin pagan.[2] But this involves free handling of the record.[3] Again, the principle of gradual development in the divine education of man under the Old Covenant has a full tradition behind it. The "moral difficulties of the Old Testament" are to be explained in the light of the fact that God was doing the best for the education of a savage people, by leading them forward gradually into the true way.[4] Even in the Gospels St. Chrysostom would have us accept the consolation that the discrepancies between them in detail only enhance the value of their common witness to the matters of chief importance.[1]

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[1] See *Lux Mundi*, p. 263, also p. xxv, n. 1.

[2] p. 241, n. 1; also Chrysostom on St. Matt. vi. 3.

[3] In St. Jerome's preface to the Epistle to *Philemon* he quotes the opinion of some who would refuse it a place in the canon on the ground that everything which occurs in St. Paul's Epistles was not written under inspiration, e.g. not "The cloak which I left at Troas," etc., or "But withal prepare me a lodging," or "Would that they that trouble you were cut off" (or "mutilated")—just as the prophets do not always write under inspiration, but sometimes as a *homo communis*. See Sanday, *Inspiration*, pp. 43–4.

[4] *Lux Mundi*, pp. 240–2.

Also we need to notice that Origen makes it part of the authoritative tradition of the Church that the Scriptures, which were written by the agency of the Spirit of God, "have two senses, the plain and the hidden, whereof the latter can be known only to those to whom is given the grace of the Holy Spirit in the word of wisdom and knowledge."[2] And he revelled in this belief in a mystical and allegorical sense of Scripture, to the extent of delighting to point out statements in the Old Testament which could not be true in their literal sense and were only meant to stimulate us to discern their spiritual meaning. And though Origen's successors would not commonly have been ready to admit that the literal meaning could be untrue in fact, they used the key of the mystical meaning in a way that we should regard as totally arbitrary, to emancipate the Church from "the letter" of the Old Testament.

As we read the Christian Fathers, then, we find them to be men of very different intellectual statures and tendencies; and we feel that in our modern controversies about the meaning and consequences of inspiration they would have taken different sides: that some of them, St. Chrysostom for instance, would have welcomed modern criticism, and some of them, for instance St. Leo, would have decisively rejected it; and that St. Augustine would have accepted it as a matter of course before his conversion, and hesitated long afterwards about it, and finally, under the exigencies of controversy, rejected it. But this is, of course, conjecture.

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[1] *In Matt.* Hom. i, 2, *P.G.* lvii, 16, 17, 18.

[2] *De Princ.*, i, prol. The school of Antioch, however, did not, or did but slightly, admit the legitimacy of recurrence to "the hidden" meaning.

The other point which we should wish to emphasize is that, in spite of manifold provocations, in early days the Church never formulated any binding dogma on the subject of inspiration, nor even contemplated such a course. Even up to the time of the *Encyclical* of Leo XIII, Newman can plead that "The Councils of Trent and of the Vatican tell us distinctly the object and the promise of Scriptural inspiration. They specify 'faith and moral conduct' as the drift of that teaching which has the guarantee of inspiration." It is with the doctrine of inspiration, as with the doctrine of the Atonement, that different theories have become dominant at different periods, and later have been more or less completely rejected by the common sense of the Church, and the old belief has been none the less maintained, but in a sense which has been—providentially—left quite undefined.

In many respects we are not at all the intellectual superiors of our remote forefathers. In some we are conspicuously inferior to the ancients of this or that period. But in some we have made real and immense advances. The science of history is one of these latter departments. In spite of all the extravagances and waywardnesses of some critics and historians, in spite of the real or supposed victories which tradition is said to have won over criticism, there is no question about it that an infinitely truer view of the length and scope and stages of history, and of the various kinds of literature in which the human spirit has expressed itself, is possible for us than was possible for the men of two centuries or less ago.[1] And just as it was fatal for the Church to claim the power to lay a restraining hand on the freedom of astronomical science, because its results were disturbing to those who had been taught to believe that all the statements of the Bible on all sorts of subjects were infallibly true, so is it fatal for the Church to claim to restrict the sphere of historical criticism. It must be applied to the history and documents of the Bible, Old Testament and New,[1] as to all documents which claim to be human history and human literature. What we have a right to demand is that it shall be really *historical* criticism, and not inspired by a dogmatic belief, which has no claim to call itself historical science, that there can have been no such events as are called supernatural. But if we follow the course only of legitimate criticism, it leads to many conclusions as to sacred history and literature which are startling and revolutionary, just as it does in history that we call secular. We must welcome all the conclusions which are apparently assured, and when we have done so we find that a certain kind of belief about the effect of inspiration which was possible to our forefathers has become impossible for us. We must admit more of gradualness, more of fallibility and individuality in the human instruments, than used to be admitted. But when all this has been done, we dare to maintain that the grounds for believing in a real inspiration by the Holy Spirit of God not only of the prophets and apostles, but also of the writers generally of the Old and New Testaments, are not less strong than before. We have been led by the evidence to limit the scope of the inspiration to "the things of faith and morals"; and we have been led to recognize degrees of inspiration. We do not find nearly so much of the inspiration of God in Chronicles or Ecclesiastes or Esther as in the prophets. But we do find the movement of the same spirit in all the books. And the longer we put ourselves to school in the books of the Bible the more sure do we come to feel about the inspiration of their writers.

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[1] See *Belief in God*, p. 13.

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[1] Some of us, who claim to be Biblical critics and also believers in the Christian Creed, are still annoyed by the imputation that we are ready to apply criticism freely to the Old Testament but not to the New (see G. C. Coulton, *Five Centuries of Religion*, p. 11). More than twenty years ago Dr. Driver and I repudiated this imputation, and I have done so since again and again. To make it implies that free criticism is always destructive of real historicity. But this is not so. As often it is constructive. It is so, I believe, when it is allowed to be really free about the documents of the New Testament. What is asked for the Gospels and Acts is only what criticism vindicates for the account in the books of Samuel and Kings of David's reign, viz. that it is good history. Criticism applied to different periods and documents reaches different results.

Something has still to be said about the two distinguishable uses of the Bible—as historical documents and as the books of inspired men ; but before we come to this there is the last of the suggested questions which has still to be met.

V

Is the position reasonable which, affirming the finality and, in a sense, completeness of the New Testament teaching about the meaning and content of the Gospel message, still demands that the tradition of the Church be relied upon to interpret both it and the Old Testament ?

It has been commonly remarked that the shock of modern criticism as applied to the Bible has been felt much less among Catholics than among Protestants. This cannot mean that the formal standards of orthodoxy about Holy Scripture have been less strict among the former. As we have seen, the doctrine of Biblical inspiration as stated by Leo XIII was of the severest and most rigid kind ; and in the Church of England the Tractarian tradition was as strict as the Evangelical. But Roman Catholics in general have not had the Bible as an "open book." They have not been familiar with it as a whole ; it has not constantly been read in their ears in public worship in their own tongues ; it has not been normal piety to read it. "Who reads the Evangelists ?" is even to-day a question by which

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the Italian Papini can rebut the objection that it could not be necessary for him simply to retell the story of Jesus, which is incomparably well told in the original documents. Certainly then, though among Roman Catholic students the strain has probably been great, it has not been much felt among the laity.

And generally it is true that a Catholic—in the sense of one who believes in the Church and the divine authority of its Creed—ought to have felt, and has in fact felt, the strain of the New Criticism less than the Protestant, whose traditional authority has been "the Bible and the Bible only." For the power of naked appeal to the infallible book—chapter by chapter and verse by verse—was exactly what the New Learning of our day has cut at the root. And popular Protestantism was in fact thrown into the deepest confusion. The mere appeal to the Book had tended to level all its parts[1]; and that upon the highest level of value and certainty. To say that man had developed out of the lower animals, or that Moses did not give the Law as it stands in the Pentateuch, or that there are inaccuracies in the Gospels, seemed to demolish the basis of faith. The Catholic was plainly better off. His faith rested primarily on the Creed of the Church. This gave him his point of view. It lifted into high relief certain events and ideas as the things to be believed. Granted the assurance that these things were so, he had still the solid ground under his feet, while the discussion about Biblical inspiration and the nature of the Old Testament books proceeded.

And the Catholic point of view is fundamentally the true one. In a sense Christ may be said to have left the Church with a book, but it was the Old Testament, and this was confessedly imperfect and superseded by the authority inherent in Himself. "It was said to them of old time . . . but I say unto you"; "The law and the prophets were until John." Thus the value of the Old Testament was chiefly prophetic. It had proclaimed a certain doctrine about God, and in various ways had prefigured and predicted what God was to do in the good time coming. Thus it "proved" that Jesus was the Christ; and it supplied the New Israel with a mass of moral warnings and instructions. But henceforth it could not be the final or central authority. "We do wrong to the New Testament," said Augustine, "if we put the Old on the same level with it." The final authority lay in the Lord Jesus. And He had written nothing, but He had reinstituted the divine society, the Church of God, and in the persons of the apostles had equipped it with a body of instructed men who were to be "his witnesses." Thus besides the Old Testament the Church had at first no book, but only "the teaching of the apostles," as orally delivered, in their memories and hearts. The Church was the bearer of the authoritative message, "the word of God." Gradually the books were written which came to form the canon of the New Testament. But for the most part they were books written to meet some special need in some particular church or individual member of the church. They were none of them written to uninstructed or unbaptized persons to give them their first understanding of the Christian faith. The "apostles' teaching," "the form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered," is always presupposed. This we note throughout the New Testament. The readers of the different books are to be those who already hold and understand the faith.

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[1] So it made the Puritans intensely Judaic. See Truslow Adams, *Founding of New England*, p. 80.

This is so with the narrative of the Gospels, as is witnessed by St. Luke's preface—"that thou mayest know the certainty about the things in which thou wast informed" (at the time of initiation into the Christian religion). The circumstances of St. Mark's composition of his Gospel indicate that the object of his writing was to record an oft-told tale. So St. John wrote the Fourth Gospel to confirm the Church in the faith, and apparently to supplement, and in detail correct, an existing tradition. In the Epistle which accompanied his Gospel, he reiterates that it is "the word which ye heard" (when ye became Christians) that he is writing. "Ye know all things," "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it," "That which ye heard from the beginning" is to abide in them. So it is with St. James: "Ye know this, my beloved brethren." So it is with St. Jude: he writes exhorting them "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered." So St. Paul refers constantly back to an original "tradition," a word delivered, which not even he, not even an angel from God, can have authority to alter.

It is important to notice in studying the New Testament what it is that those who are to read or hear particular letters are supposed already to have been taught and to know; and in the case of St. Paul's converts we can discover this with some completeness, though so incidentally are the points mentioned that we must not argue from his silence on any particular point that it was not part of his preliminary teaching. But these 'elements,' or the 'tradition,' certainly comprised (1) a code of personal and social morality (1 Thess. iv. 1, 2, 9); (2) some teaching about the name of God—the Father, the Lord Jesus, or the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the Incarnation of the Son and His present glory and future coming—knowledge of this 'doctrine' being plainly assumed; (3) certain facts concerning our Lord's human life—His birth of a woman, His death for our sins, resurrection and ascension, and

His appearances after His resurrection in detail; (4) the meaning of the sacraments of baptism (Rom. vi. 3) and the eucharist, the incidents of the institution being given at length; (5) the Church as the New Israel and the Body of Christ and the sphere of the Holy Spirit's action. This must not be taken as an exhaustive list of points on which St. Paul takes it for granted his converts have been already instructed. St. Luke's preface would seem to indicate that our Lord's birth of a virgin was already in the tradition—that is, among the things of which Theophilus had been informed. In the more strictly Jewish churches we cannot so easily judge the content of the first tradition. From the Epistle to the Hebrews—if we may assume that it was written to a Hebrew church—we learn that the first elementary instruction concerned "repentance and faith, baptisms and the laying on of hands, resurrection and judgement." But the words which follow about enlightenment and tasting of the heavenly gift, and being made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasting the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, imply a fuller instruction than the list suggests. Certainly the First Gospel must be taken as a document written for Hebrew Christians, and when that was written the threefold name of God—"The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost"—which implies a theology like St. Paul's and St. John's—was already associated with baptism by what was believed to be the word of Christ.

Assuredly, then, from the time when the first books of the New Testament were being written, it was the practice of the Church to give its converts fairly full instruction in faith and morals. The Creed of the Church is considerably older than the canon. And after the canon was formed, their Creed gave the Christians their *point of view*[1] in listening to and reading the books. If in result it was agreed that "the Bible is to prove" the legitimacy of the Church teaching—i.e. is to be the final court of appeal—yet certainly it was the function of "the Church to teach" in the first instance. The convert after his baptism, and after the instruction which he received as a catechumen, found himself a member of a close fellowship saturated with a certain moral and theological and sacramental tradition. This tradition possessed him like an atmosphere, and it was as possessed by this atmosphere that he understood the Scriptures. This was the inevitable outcome of the method of Christ, who, writing no books, and giving no order for any to be written, founded a Church and instituted apostles to be the carriers of His gospel into the world.

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[1] This is Athanasius' word, σκοπός.

And just as long experience has made it evident that the tradition needs the open Bible to keep it pure, so certainly it has made it evident that the Bible needs the guidance of the Church to introduce it to its readers. I do not mean that intelligent individuals—whether Greeks and Romans of old or Indians and Japanese and Chinese of to-day—have not been enlightened and converted to Christ by reading a New Testament all alone by themselves. It has been so and it still is so. But on the whole the isolated individual with the Bible is like the eunuch of Candace. He lacks guidance. And we have abundant experience to prove that the private interpretation of the Bible becomes the source of strange perverted doctrines based on misunderstood texts, isolated from the general context. As surely as history warrants us in saying that the books were not written to give the first knowledge of Christ, but presuppose "the tradition" accepted and known, so experience warns us the books should still be kept in their original context, as books interpreted by the Church for whose members they were written.

And if the history of sectarianism teaches us this lesson, so equally does the history of Biblical criticism at the hands of critics who either disbelieve the religion or treat it as—what it never can be—a matter purely for the speculative intellect. Within their area we note the way in which the passion for new theories constantly prevails over the sober estimate of evidence; and we note also the extraordinary differences in the conclusions reached by different schools of criticism, and their rapid rise and fall. No one, I think, can study the history of rationalistic criticism without feeling that, though we owe it a great debt for the questions it has stirred and the real light it has constantly thrown on the problems, yet this is not the way to find the truth about religion, which, at its root, is still hid from the wise and understanding and revealed to the childlike. The Bible, if it is to be understood, must still be read in the same spirit in which it was written.

For the Christian religion is first of all a life based on a teaching accepted as the word of God, and constantly verified in an agelong and nearly worldwide experience. No doubt its message and claim must be constantly tested. For most men the testing must be mainly practical. Put to account by faith, the claim verifies itself as divine in moral and spiritual experience. But it must also be tested intellectually and in the field of critical history, and to do this is the special vocation of the scholar. He must do it with entire freedom, following the light where it leads him. But he will be the better equipped for enquiry, not the worse, because he understands his subject-matter with the sort of understanding that only faith, and the experience based on faith, could ever have given him.

VI

To conclude, then, there are two uses of Scripture which must be kept on the whole distinct. There is the evidential use ; and for this purpose we must treat the books of the Bible like any other books, without any regard to inspiration. It is indeed wholly illogical and out of order to introduce the claim of inspiration for the books of the New Testament before the faith in Christ is secured. And for this purpose again we must treat the books, not as collected into a canon of sacred scripture, but as independent books, the date and character of which it is the problem of criticism to fix. And all this must be done freely—nothing must be allowed to obscure the possibility of divergent opinions in the different authors, though (as has been said) it is true that the student who understands the religion from within is more likely to show a sane and balanced understanding of the books than one to whom they are merely as documents dug up by antiquarians out of the Syrian sand. Still, in the evidential use of the books the presuppositions of piety must not be allowed to hinder the adoption of any conclusion which criticism requires. The documents must be treated and estimated solely on their historical value and as witnesses to what the writers believed and had experienced.

But this is not their primary use. They grew up within the Church as documents in which inspiration —that is, the action of the Spirit of God on the soul of man—is seen at its highest. They are set before believing souls as documents of the highest spiritual authority. Each Christian is challenged to put himself to school with book after book, with the sure conviction that each one of the books has something to teach him, some special aspect of truth which his soul needs to mould it into the divine likeness. And this is the use of the Bible with which the preacher is mostly concerned.

No doubt "evidential" lectures should be delivered occasionally from the pulpit, and they should be boldly based on a frank and free criticism. No doubt also in the preacher's normal use of the Bible he should have the conclusions of criticism in his mind. He will not, in drawing rich lessons from the early chapters of Genesis, imply that they are historical accounts of particular incidents, because he knows better. He will not quote the passage about the Three Heavenly Witnesses, because he knows it does not belong to the original text. He will not quote St. Matt. xii. 40 or xxviii. 19—the formula of the threefold name—as words of our Lord if he seriously doubts whether they are so. But he will not obtrude his opinions. He will seek to preach positively, not negatively, and almost always in view of the object of preaching—to show men "the way," and the truths which are the ground of the way, and which assist us to follow it. And recognizing how wide and deep the function of "the Scriptures" as "instruments of the spiritual life" was intended to be, he will never be content to say merely "the Church teaches" so and so, still less to emphasize some fragments of Church teaching at the expense of the balance of the whole, but he will teach fully and richly out of Scripture as a man can do only if it is for himself the very treasure-house of truth.

And when we are thinking of the Bible as the book of the Church for the nourishment of the spiritual life we need to bear in mind the canon that "the Church may not so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another." In the practical spiritual use of the Bible the Church has given this maxim a rather powerful extension. I feel sure that if we took the Epistle to the Hebrews as an isolated book, we should say that when the author wrote that "as touching those who were once enlightened . . . and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance," he meant to deny the possibility of repentance to deliberate apostates. But the Church insisted on its being interpreted in view of what is certainly the general sense for Scripture—that is, as not limiting the possibility of repentance in *any* case, or the right of the Church to restore *any* penitent. Again, St. Matthew twice appears to admit an exception to the indissolubility of marriage which St. Paul, St. Mark, and St. Luke do not contemplate; and here again we find the Church canonizing St. Matthew, but generally "explaining away" his exception. The fact that one of the Epistles and one of the Gospels should admit something which appears to be discrepant to the general sense of the New Testament is a fact which has to be taken account of in our estimate of inspiration, as not being equivalent to infallibility in detail. But concerning the Church as a teaching body, entrusted with a divine message, the maxim I have quoted, on which the Church has generally insisted, is full of right reason. It is the general sense of Scripture which must govern the teaching, rather than any isolated texts.

May I end this discussion of the authority of Holy Scripture by quoting some sane, serious words about the study of Scripture, words written by a Carthusian monk—Guigo of the abbey of Mont Dieu—about A.D. 1135 to his monastic brethren?

> "Moreover," he writes, "you must get leisure for definite reading at a definite hour. Reading left to chance, and reading of passages at haphazard, does not edify, but renders the mind unstable. And what is lightly lodged there, lightly withdraws. But it must be dwelt upon with faculties concentrated; and the mind needs to become accustomed to the study. For the Scriptures require to be read in the same spirit in which

they were written,[1] and can only so be understood. You will never enter into the sense of Paul until by the exercise of good intention in reading him and by assiduous meditation you have imbibed his spirit. You will never understand David till by actual experience the feelings of his psalms have become yours. And so with the rest. And in every scripture study is as different from mere reading, as friendship is from entertaining a guest, and social affection from an accidental salutation. . . . If in reading the reader seeks God, everything that he reads co-operates with him to this end, and it captivates his feeling and brings his whole sense of the passage into the obedience of Christ. If, on the other hand, the feeling of the reader declines upon some other end, it drags everything with it. And he finds nothing so holy or pious in Scripture as either by vainglory or a distorted feeling or a corrupt understanding may not minister to his harm or to vanity."[2]

APPENDED NOTE A (see p. 869)

ON DR. A. H. MCNEILE'S "NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING IN THE LIGHT OF ST. PAUL"[3]

I have read Dr. A. H. McNeile's book with much admiration and instruction on the whole; but though I have no doubt we believe alike, in total outcome, on doctrinal matters, I have felt surprised and unconvinced by many of his conclusions in detail. And I should like to ask those who have read my volume on *Belief in Christ* to read this book also and ask themselves such questions as these: Do they feel satisfied with Dr. McNeile's method of explaining, or as it seems to me explaining away, Matt. xi. 27 (Luke x. 22) and Mark xiii. 32 (Matt. xxiv. 36) on pp. 28 ff.? Is it at all an adequate statement that to our Lord His Sonship to God " was Israel's moral sonship represented and consummated in His own human person " ? (p. 31). Again, admitting as Dr. McNeile does that St. Paul and St. John believed in Christ as the pre-existing Son of God (pp. 33 and 274), how does he find either room or need for the pre-existing Man (pp. 33, 265) of which I can find no trace in the New Testament (see *Belief in Christ*, pp. 374, n. 2, 383 f., 411, 609) ? Is not Dr. McNeile's explanation of St. Paul's use of ἐκένωσεν and ἐπτώχευσεν quite unsatisfying (pp. 63 ff.) ? Is it not a sign of arbitrariness, if out of the thirty-seven instances of the title Son of Man in the Synoptic Gospels he must discount eleven ; and amongst them all that fall before Peter's confession (pp. 46–8) ? How is the statement (p. 53) that κύριος is " nowhere in the New Testament a theological term for Christ connoting divinity " (p. 53) compatible with such a passage as Rom. x. 9–13 ? Or what do such passages as Rom. xiv. 10 and 2 Cor. v. 10 imply but some sort of resurrection of the wicked (p. 120) ? Again, is it true that " there is no other hint [in St. John's Gospel, i.e. except xxi. 22-3] of a future Advent " ? The statement seems to be implicitly contradicted on pp. 269, so far as concerns the Gospel as it stands. It is quite true that " Of the Ascension he [St. John] gives no record " ; but there are frequent allusions, iii. 13 (see *Belief in Christ*, p. 411, n. 2), vi. 62, xx. 17 ; and I see no justification for the statement that the traditional belief was " even more difficult than the Resurrection to place in line with St. John's Christian philosophy."

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[1] This maxim, we see, is very much more ancient than the *De Imitatione*.

[2] See at the end of St. Bernard's works, Guigonis, *Ep. ad fratres de Monte Dei*, i, xi. I was led to this interesting little book by a reference of Dr. Strong's.

[3] Cambridge Press, 1923.

I have thought it right, though unwillingly, to call attention to a number of points, which can easily be added to, on which Dr. McNeile reaches conclusions the opposite of mine, because it seems to me these are just points on which his theory and mine of the developments and bases of the doctrine of Christ's person can be compared and tested in the judgement of my readers.

APPENDED NOTE B (see p. 873)

IS THERE ANYTHING OF DOCTRINAL IMPORTANCE IN THE CHURCH TRADITION WHICH WAS NOT ALREADY CONTAINED IN SCRIPTURE ?

I can think of nothing doctrinally important in the primitive tradition which is not already really implicit or explicit in the New Testament. But the following points may be regarded as partial exceptions.

1. The idea of Mary as " the second Eve." This was widely taught in the second century (see Justin Martyr, *Dial.*, 100; Irenaeus, *c. Haer.*, iii, xxii, 4, v, xix, 1, *Demonstr.*, 33; Tertull., *de Carne Chr.*, 17) in a sense which implied both a definite place for the Blessed Virgin in the divine plan of redemption and a position of " advocacy " for Eve. No doubt this doctrine may have an alarming superstructure built upon it. But in itself it seems to be based on scriptural facts; and also there was no movement to make it a dogmatic requirement.

2. The idea that the bread and wine of the eucharist were, as first presented on the altar, quite apart from what they were afterwards to become by consecration, already a sacrifice. This idea appears to be universal from Clement of Rome downwards. It may be, as Justin held, intended by our Lord's words τοῦτο ποιεῖτε. But in the event this idea or doctrine came to be quite overshadowed by the greater thought of what the elements became by consecration.

It is also of interest to enquire whether any customs of the Church, or anything in its practical legislation, implied or required a doctrine as having authority, to which Scripture does not allude. I do not think that the sanction given to sacred images at the second Council of Nicaea involves any such non-scriptural doctrine, nor prayers for the dead, nor requests on the part of the Church to be helped by the prayers of the saints, though it led no doubt to perilous developments.[1] But there is one piece of ecclesiastical legislation which does seem to involve a certain doctrine—I mean the admission of the validity of baptisms and ordinations and (by implication) eucharists in heretical and schismatical bodies. On this the New Testament books are certainly quite silent. "Separated churches" are not in any way contemplated. But the matter was one which had to be decided one way or the other. Under St. Augustine's leadership the more liberal view prevailed in the West. It became, after considerable resistance, obligatory on the bishops to act in a certain way. But there was no emphasis laid on any implied doctrine, except on the doctrine that in every sacrament it is the Holy Spirit who is the real agent, and not the possibly sinful or heretical earthly minister—a doctrine which is certainly scriptural. In the East the practice has never been fully received.

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[1] See below, pp. 911, 931, on these points.

Certainly it remains true that nothing in the ancient or undivided Church has ever been made an article of faith (as distinct from a pious opinion or a religious practice) which is not to be found plainly in Scripture.

CHAPTER IX

WHAT IS OF FAITH ?

My readers and I have been seeking throughout this work to pursue a long process of continuous reasoning; and those who, on the whole, have followed with assent, or at least provisional assent, to the conclusions reached find themselves in this position—they believe that the conception of God which dominates the Old Testament and which we owe to the Hebrew prophets, and which reaches its fullest expression through Jesus Christ and the mission of the Holy Spirit, reposes upon a real self-disclosure of God, which is to be received in faith as His word; which is more satisfying than anything which men could have arrived at for themselves by the exercise of their speculative reason, and fuller than anything which can in any sense be called divine revelation to be found elsewhere in the world. It is thus rightly, from man's present point of view, described as a supernatural revelation. But the supernatural does not mean the unnatural. It is indeed but the restoration and recovery of the deeper and truer nature of man and of the universe. For what we call the "word of God" proceeds from the same fountain of truth and light as has given to man his natural reason. It is the nature of man to seek to know God and have fellowship with Him. There is a movement of God from within man, which sin has never obliterated, as well as a movement of God upon him from above. And the supernatural revelation comes therefore not to overwhelm and bewilder or eclipse the natural reason, but to augment it and to satisfy and to emancipate. Thus in accepting the supernatural revelation we at the same time glorify God our creator by refusing to ignore the claims of reason in the largest sense, whether as shown in philosophy or science or historical criticism, or in the spiritual experience of mankind.

Further, we had been led to believe that "the grace and truth" which "came by Jesus Christ" was not cast abroad in the world without any preservative organ or channel. It was committed to a society which was to be the organ of the Spirit and the Body of Christ. This society is the Old Israel, the old people of God, reorganized by Christ; but whereas in the old Israel the self-disclosure of God was confined to that one people, the New Israel is free and open to all the world, a Catholic Church. Such a Church is by its very nature destitute of those links which bind nations and most human fellowships together, such as a common country or language or racial tradition or common occupation; but we have found it to be provided from the beginning with special links to preserve its continuity and cohesion —especially three: (1) The authority of an apostolic ministry which perpetuated itself in various grades and which everywhere was to be regarded with the reverence due to divinely appointed "stewards of the divine mysteries." (2) Certain sacraments of fellowship in which all were bound to participate, because they are the divinely given occasions and instruments for the bestowal of specific divine gifts, which all alike need, such as regeneration, and the possession of the Spirit, and the indwelling of Christ. (3) The common teaching or rule of faith or tradition, which was to be accepted by all the members of the Church as the word of God.

Finally, we have been occupied in examining the nature of the authority claimed by the Church for its tradition, and for its officers as the responsible exponents of its tradition; and inasmuch as there have risen into prominence in Church history varying estimates of its range and character, we have been seeking to discriminate the true from the false or exaggerated estimate of the authority of the Church; and in particular to vindicate a certain regulative supremacy and finality which the ancient tradition assigned to Scripture, as adequately embodying the teaching of the apostles.

But now we may reasonably be asked another question. What, according to you, is the content of this authoritative tradition of which the Church is set in charge—what is "of faith" for those who believe, as you would have them believe, in the authority of the Catholic Church? Some answer to this question we require for our own peace of mind, and because from all sides some further definition of our position is demanded of us in a world as full as our world is of intellectual questionings and contending creeds. What then, more or less in detail, do you understand by Catholicism considered as a dogmatic or doctrinal system? We intend to try to meet this challenge by considerations as purely objective and historical as possible, leaving aside—only for the moment[1]—any consideration of the difficulties which arise when we seek to apply our conclusions to the present circumstances of the world. But before we set out on this rather formidable enterprise there are one or two reminders which we should do well to give ourselves at starting.

1. First, we must quite dispossess our minds of the expectation that authority will best show its divine origin by the assurance with which it can answer all sorts of questions. The Christian religion came into the world as a life to be lived, and not primarily as a doctrine to be received. It came into

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[1] See chap. xi, p. 956.

the world to exhibit the true life of sonship and brotherhood—to show men the real meaning of humanity. It was, and still is, enabled to do this in virtue of truths which it has been taught about God and His purpose, and by a real and continuous experience which only these truths can explain. "The life" is based upon "the truth"; and it is the content of the "word of truth" which alone can make faith sure, or hope vigorous, or love active. And concerning all that is really needful for that moral and practical purpose, there is no very serious question as to what the Church is commissioned to teach. But religious curiosity has not been at all satisfied with that. It has wanted to know a great deal about the unseen world and the state of the dead, and the glory of the saints and of the Virgin Mother, and about the manner of the sacramental presence, and many other "secret things"; and these questions —for which the ancient tradition had no answers— have received answers 'on authority' by a process of (somewhat miscalled) development. And there can be no question, I think, that the drift of all this additional teaching has been to satisfy curiosity about the other world, at the expense of attention to this. The Church has strangely forgotten its function to establish a visible example of the Kingdom of God here and now in this world. And you do not help to a right direction of the Church's interest in this world by increasing the amount of information supposed to be authoritative about the other. And the growth of required dogma, involved in answering questions to which the apostles had no answer, has been to many noble and generous souls, who are surely friends of Christ, a sore addition to their intellectual burden. The tendency of such a consideration is to make us wish to minimize rather than to maximize the dogmatic requirements. We must seek without evasion to interpret the faith as authoritative tradition has handed it down. But we shall pay great attention to the marked reserve of the scriptural revelation. Assuredly, according to that, "we know in part, and we prophesy in part." As with those who lived under the Old Covenant, so still with us under the New, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God" and "the more part of his works are hid."

2. We should never forget that the faith is the faith of the great Church before it is the personal conviction of an individual. No doubt the Church has demanded of its candidates for baptism (or in their name in the case of infants) a strong profession of personal faith in the clauses of the Apostles' Creed, "All this I steadfastly believe,"[1] and a renewal of this profession in the visitation of the sick. In the case of the neophyte in baptism I suppose this means that he has been taught the creed of the Church and accepts it on its authority. In visitations of the sick we know that the prescribed examination of the sick man's faith causes, in not rare cases, such difficulty that the priest must content himself with something much less stringent—"Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief."[2] What is wanted is the profession of the desire and intention of the individual to unite himself to the faith of the Church. St. Thomas Aquinas says:

> "The confession of faith is made [*traditur*] in the creed as in the person of the whole Church which is united by faith. But the faith of the Church is an instructed faith [*fides formata*] . . . and therefore the

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[1] This is the Anglican form; but it is, in substance, the ancient requirement. In the proposed revision of the Prayer Book an alternative form is offered, according to which the minister asks: "Dost thou in [this child's] name profess the Christian faith? *Answer*: I do. *Then shall be said by the Minister and Godparents the Apostles' Creed.*"

[2] Some provision is made in this sense in the revised form for the Visitation of the Sick.

confession of faith is made in the creed in terms suitable to an instructed faith, so that, even if there are individuals among the faithful who have not an instructed faith, they should [at least] desire to reach it."[1]

Further, the Church from time to time in its early history made specific requirements, especially upon its bishops, of adhesion to the doctrinal decisions of the Councils, and in later times has required a specific profession of personal faith from all those who are to be appointed its officers. Such requirements may be criticized in detail,[2] but it can hardly be regarded as unreasonable that those who are required to teach a particular creed should be required also to express their personal adhesion to it. With those exceptions the Church has made no inquisition into men's private minds and no specific demand on the laity. On the whole, I cannot help thinking that we should make the purpose for which the Creed is recited in public worship more evident if we were to say it in the form in which the Council proclaimed the Nicene Creed—beginning not "I believe" but "we believe,"[3] which would mean, "This we acknowledge to be the Catholic faith, to which through all failures of faith we intend to unite ourselves."

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[1] *Summa Theol.*, 2^{a} 2^{ae}, 9, 1, art. 9.

[2] In the case of the Anglican Church these requirements were largely revised in 1865, and an excellent revision is now proposed of the Declaration about Faith in the Scriptures, which it is proposed should run: "*Bishop:* Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments, *as given of God to convey to us in many parts and in divers manners the revelation of Himself which is fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ? Answer:* I do." The change proposed consists in the addition of the words italicized.

[3] It has often been said that, while in the Western Church the Creed occurring in the services begins "I believe," in the Eastern Church it begins "We believe." But this is a mistake. In the Eastern Orthodox Church also it begins "I believe" in the Liturgy of St. James (Brightman's *Liturgies*, p. 42) and St. Mark (p. 124) and St. Chrysostom (p. 383, cf. p. 320). In the Liturgy of the Abyssinian Jacobites, however (p. 226), it is the plural "We believe"; so also in that of the Nestorians (p. 270), and in that of

I

What, then, is the content of this Catholic faith?

Its root lies in the doctrine concerning God and man and the divine purpose for the world which we owe to the Hebrew prophets. I shall seek in the next chapter to emphasize the dominant importance of this fundamental doctrine, on which our Lord undoubtedly built and which controls the whole Christian Creed. And the Church of the early centuries gallantly contended for its distinctive features, both as regards the divine nature and the freedom of man, in its long struggle both to use and to correct the principles and phrases of Greek philosophy. But I think it cannot be denied that some of these principles or assumptions—such as the immutability and impassibility of God—were allowed rather seriously to obscure the Old Testament conception of a God who has limited Himself by the creation of free beings, and accommodates Himself to a situation which sin has introduced, quite contrary to His will, and consents to struggle for man's good against man's rebellion, and to be afflicted in the afflictions of His people—a conception of God which, of course, reaches its climax in the thought of the incarnation and passion of Him who is "very God." We certainly need a careful examination of the treatment by the theologians of the divine attributes.[1] However, it is

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the Armenians (p. 426), and in the Liturgy of the Syrian Jacobites (p. 82) the priest is to say "We believe," and each of the faithful "I believe." I suppose that in the service of baptism the confession of faith made by the candidate was universally in the singular, "I believe." See Brightman in *Early History of the Church and Ministry*, pp. 343 ff.

[1] I think also that, in the doctrine of human nature, the proposition that the soul of man is in its essence incorruptible and so necessarily immortal (St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.*, p. 1, qu. 75, art. 6: "Respondeo dicendum, quod necesse est dicere, animam humanam, quam dicimus intellectivum principium, esse incorruptibilem") is derived from Greek philosophy and not from Scripture.

from the Bible chiefly that we are to learn about God, and the metaphysical scruples of the theologians have not been allowed in any way to affect the Creeds and the dogmas of the Church. It is none other than the God of Israel and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who is still our God.

For the revelation given to Israel received its culmination in the Incarnation. And the faith of the Church in God is the outcome of the whole process of divine self-disclosure, by which the name of the one God became the name of the Father, and of the Son—Jesus Christ—and of the Holy Ghost. It was through their experience of the man Christ Jesus that the first disciples came to believe Him to be Lord and God. But this belief in Jesus as the eternal Son incarnate, and in the Spirit, whose presence within men is God's presence and Christ's presence, involved the belief in the Trinity in unity. The doctrine of the Incarnation is explicit, but the doctrine of the Trinity is certainly implicit [1] in the New Testament; and both alike received explicit statement in the Nicene Creed [2] and were protected by four definitions of Ecumenical Councils, repudiating four different attempts to explain the person of

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[1] I have lately read the deeply interesting and entertaining record of *The Travels of Fa-hsien* in the excellent translation of Professor H. A. Giles. But he writes a preface in which he speaks of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (p. vii), and he chooses to say that "nothing was heard of it in the early centuries of the Church, and it was first enunciated in detail as a mystery in the so-called Athanasian Creed, of (?) fourth century A.D.," etc. It would be hard to compress more mistakes into a single sentence. Any history of doctrine would have enlightened Professor Giles as to the facts. If a theologian were to make an equally ignorant statement about (say) Buddhism, he would be justly chastised and his reputation would suffer. But it appears that men of learning in other departments are allowed to say what they please about theology.

[2] Surely it is pedantic to insist on speaking continually of the expanded and modified Creed of Chalcedon as "Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan" (which is very likely inaccurate) or by any other periphrasis.

Christ which were found to be fundamentally subversive of the Christian faith.

Certainly the Catholic Church is committed in the deepest sense to this Creed with its affirmations both of facts and principles, and to these definitions. In their appeal to the New Testament on behalf of their definitions we must acknowledge that the Fathers are abundantly justified. Certainly there is to be found there the faith in the real deity of Christ, and in the continuity and unity of His person, before and after His incarnation, and in the full and permanent reality of the humanity which He assumed and in which He was glorified. No doubt the dogmas have been misused; but only in so far as it was forgotten that they were primarily negative, and that for our positive picture of the Christ we must constantly go back to the Gospels. But as to this I believe enough has been said elsewhere.[1]

No doubt a good deal of human nature at its worst is to be found in the history of these Ecumenical Councils; if there had been less of human sin at work the definitions need not have involved such serious and permanent schisms as did in fact result. Nevertheless, nothing of substantial value for the Church has emerged from Arianism or Nestorianism or Monophysitism since they became organized in separate churches, and nothing, we may thankfully recognize, which was right in the theological intentions of those who supported these heresies, or hesitated to condemn them, has been in result excluded from the Catholic faith. On the other hand, I think it is impossible to consider how strong a tendency there was inside the Church to reduce the meaning of the "flesh" of Christ into a mere veil of a divine theophany, or a mere medium for the sacramental communication of God to man, without feeling that the Holy Spirit of truth was overruling the Church through all the period of the Councils, producing that strong determination which the Church showed to insist on the full reality and complete activity of the manhood in Christ, in reason and will and spirit as well as in body, and guiding the mind of the Church to the production of a protective formula of balanced antithesis. We recognize that the Fathers might truly say, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us."

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, chaps. vii and viii, pp. 492 and 527. Also above, Appended Note, p. 848, where the objections of Dr. Mackintosh are considered at length.

II

I have spoken in the main about four Councils—Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon—because the fifth (second of Constantinople, A.D. 553), which condemned certain writings of theologians long dead who had fostered Nestorianism or condemned the theology of St. Cyril, did not add anything to the theological definition of Ephesus, and need not receive the attention of the 'layman' in technical theology[1]; and the sixth Council (third of Constantinople, A.D. 680), which balanced the fifth, as Chalcedon had balanced Ephesus, though its affirmation of the reality of the human will and complete human activity in our Lord (as well as the divine will and divine activity) was really important, yet substantially added nothing to the work of the second and fourth Councils. So that for our present purpose we can ignore them.

But something must be said about the seventh council (second of Nicaea, A.D. 787). Its claim to be called ecumenical has been seriously disputed, and by such men among our theologians as William Palmer and John Mason Neale—but not convincingly, if it be judged by objective tests, for it was finally received universally as ecumenical like the second Council. The Eastern Orthodox Churches in particular hold to it with even a fanatical devotion ; and I do not think its conclusions need be rejected on the ground that they are unscriptural. Its object was to vindicate afresh the making and venerating of sacred images (icons) against the imperial and military iconoclasts. The theologians upon whom the Council relied, of whom the greatest was St. John of Damascus, were surely right in saying that the Incarnation had introduced an important modification into the sense of the second Commandment. It could not be wrong to make artistic representations of the human form and acts and sufferings of Jesus Christ. Such pictures are "the books of the unlearned," and for all men are intended to serve as memorials of events with which our redemption is bound up. And similar memorials of the saints must be allowed, and of angels (who have appeared as men). So the Council affirmed. When the customary respect and veneration is paid to the image, it is not paid to the material object, but to its unseen prototype. And adoration (*latria*) is to be given, not to any saints nor to any image, even of Christ, but only to God as He is in Himself. The Council was occupied in vindicating a Church practice, passionately clung to, rather than in establishing a theological principle. But there is a theology involved and declared by the Council, and I do not think it should offend us as unreasonable or unscriptural. It would indeed have been well if the Church had always sought to keep the devotion of its people within the limits prescribed by the Council.[1]

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[1] See, however, Appended Note, p. 935, on the fifth and seventh Councils.

Nevertheless—in respect of devotional practice—the whole-hearted acceptance of the principle of images and of paying them ceremonial homage, does represent a change of attitude as compared to that of earlier teachers of the Church. St. Augustine could not have written as he did against the veneration of images among the pagans, repudiating as a subterfuge the distinction proffered between grades of worship,[1] if the Church of his day had accepted the principles of the second Nicene Council. There was in fact a strenuous effort on the part of some of the Fathers—who were very familiar with pagan idolatry—against a tendency of human nature to make and venerate images and pictures of holy persons, which is not necessarily idolatry, but runs easily into it ; but the tendency proved too strong to be resisted, and what the second Nicene Council sought to do was to approve the practice of making and venerating images, with the enthusiasm of men who had just been relieved from persecution for their inherited religious customs, and at the same time to safeguard it against running into idolatry. That the barriers it raised did not prove wholly effective does not condemn the Council. And there are very few to-day who would condemn the making of images of Christ or of the saints.

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[1] See Appended Note, p. 935.

III

We have mentioned all the definitions which the whole Church in ecumenical council has formulated and made obligatory upon its teachers or in a less direct sense upon all its members. But there is of course a large body of coherent "articles of faith" which have either never received definition at all, or at any rate have never received definition of the like ecumenical authority. Thus St. Paul taught the Church very explicitly to believe that not only are individual men sinners, but that mankind as a whole, all the children of Adam, are involved in sin, before any actual sins of their own, inheriting a nature biassed towards evil and enslaved to evil. Thus they need, every one of them, not merely enlightenment and encouragement, but a fundamental renewal of their nature and redemption from bondage, which it is the purpose of the free grace of God to give them in Christ, transforming them from the old type of manhood to the new. St. Paul is explicit about all this; and the doctrine of "original sin" is implicit in the Bible generally, and it is an underlying assumption of theology, Eastern as well as Western,[1] though the Easterns are more constantly occupied in asserting man's remaining freedom. When the denials of Pelagius forced the question to the front, Augustine became the vindicator-in-chief of the idea of man's inherently sinful state, but he also startled the West by his exaggerations of our depravity and helplessness. What has a right to be called Catholic teaching on the subject received moderate expression at a small Council of Orange in 529, which, as confirmed by the Pope, became authoritative in the West and also represents the doctrine of the East. In the decrees of this Council original sin was emphatically dissociated from St. Augustine's terrible affirmation of "the predestination of souls to evil by the power of God," which is condemned with horror; and the free will in man is declared to be "warped and weakened," but not destroyed; and it is not suggested that the fault or defect of our nature is itself *guilt*, which seems to be an especially personal word. I have tried at an earlier stage of our discussion[2] to show how the doctrine can be freed from the exaggerations and associations of gross injustice which have been allowed to encrust it, and can be expressed in terms which do not leave it in collision with biological science. So freed and so re-expressed I dare to say that the experience and conscience of men respond to it and confirm it. Here I am only concerned to maintain that it has behind it the authority of Scripture and of the Catholic tradition.

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[1] See *Enarr. in Psalm* cxiii, Serm. ii, 4–6: "Quis enim adorat vel orat intuens simulacrum, qui non sic afficitur, ut ab eo se exaudiri putet, ab eo sibi praestari quod desiderat speret ?"

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[1] Thus Origen takes for granted that all men are fallen, even when he relegates the fall to a previous state of existence. This idea of a prenatal fall was his earlier, though apparently not his final, teaching. On the revival of this idea see *Can We then Believe?* n. 8, pp. 196 ff.

[2] *Belief in Christ*, chap. ix, p. 552.

There are two other doctrines to be named which have behind them the whole weight of Catholic authority—the Atonement made once for all for the sins of men by the sacrifice of the cross, and the inspiration of the writers of Scripture by the Spirit of God. Both are barely alluded to in the Nicene Creed in the words "crucified *for us*," and "I believe in the Holy Ghost . . . *who spake by the prophets*"; but in spite of marked differences of theory about the former which have prevailed in different ages, and of considerable differences about the second in the early centuries, nothing has been done, either by ecumenical council or even by general consent, to define either the one or the other. The former has in the most emphatic sense the authority of Scripture, and the enthusiastic assent of the Christian world as a whole; the latter has, for the Old Testament the emphatic authority of the New, and for the New Testament the belief of the Christian Church from the beginning. The former has been, like the doctrine of the Fall, even monstrously encumbered with associations of injustice which have revolted the consciences of good men; and in ages before the rise of historical criticism, the latter has been given an extension of meaning and identified with infallibility in a way which criticism has made impossible for us. But, as has been said, the Church has not defined their meaning, and they can be disencumbered of features which are contrary to our moral conscience or our reason without any real loss of spiritual value.[1] So disencumbered they do not, as I have argued already, present any real obstacle to our intellects, while both of them in Christian experience have received the widest and deepest confirmation.

IV

It is certainly remarkable what doctrines were *not* inserted in the Creeds. But it has to be remembered that both the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds were originally baptismal creeds, and the clauses were expansions of the threefold name of God—the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost—in which baptism was conferred. This—the faith in the name—was in a pre-eminent sense the Catholic faith, and still in the *Quicunque Vult* (as in the *Te Deum* and the *Gloria in excelsis*) this only is so proclaimed. The corollaries of this faith, about which there was no dispute, could be taken for granted. So it was that there is in the Creeds only the barest allusion to the doctrines of the Atonement and the inspiration of Scripture. So also, while *I believe in the Holy Ghost* received expansion in *I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church* (which is the organ of the Holy Spirit), or as in the early African creed, *I believe the remission of sins and eternal life through the holy Church*, nothing was said in the Creeds about the sacraments except (in the Nicene Creed) *I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins*. That is all. And yet this meagre mention of one sacrament, and the absence of any attempt at authoritative definition of any sacrament for more than a thousand years, stands in even startling contrast to the intensity of the belief in their spiritual efficacy which possessed the Church from the beginning. That the Church is the home of the Spirit, and that membership in Christ and all His rich gifts are imparted to men through the sacraments of the Church, was the constant belief and experience of Christians, and was grounded, as we have seen, on the apostolic teaching.[1] Thus they believed that baptism was their new birth—that by the action of the Holy Spirit in that sacrament they passed into a new spiritual status "in Christ," and their old sins were washed away. Baptism was both "their grave and their mother." They believed also that in the rite of the laying on of the bishop's hand, in which baptism was completed, there was imparted to each individual the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which gave him his full standing in the royal and priestly body. There is no subject on which the early teaching is richer and more spiritual than on the subject of baptism; and no part of the expressive ritual of the Church was more full of meaning than the rite of baptism. Nor during all the early period, when to become a Christian was a dangerous adventure, was there much peril of a mechanical or magical idea of baptism. The moral requirement was unmistakable, and it was expressed in the current dread of post-baptismal sin, which made men doubt whether more than one absolution for gross sin after baptism was even possible.

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[1] This has been argued earlier: see *Belief in Christ*, chap. x, p. 576, for the doctrine of the Atonement; for the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scripture see in this book, pp. 874 ff. See also a tract on *The Doctrine of the Infallible Book*, by Gore and Mackintosh (Student Christian Movement).

No doubt, when Christianity became the established religion, baptism became largely a convention and the belief in its efficacy largely non-moral. But this was purely an abuse against which the language of the rite of baptism, as of the New Testament, was a continual protest. In fact it ought to be no more possible to draw a *contrast* between the requirement of baptism and the requirement of faith and conversion than to draw a contrast between food and digestion. As the healings of Christ in the Gospels required both the power which passed out from Him and also the faith of the recipient to appropriate it, so in baptism, and in the sacraments generally, the external rite embodies the power of the Spirit and supplies the spiritual food; but its efficacy to effect the spiritual enrichment of the soul of the recipient depends upon the faith of his converted will. There is need of equal emphasis on both factors.

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[1] See above, chap. iv, p. 728.

About the doctrine of baptism there was not any appreciable variety of opinion. But that was not so about the doctrine of the eucharist. I am not attempting here to write a history of theology, but only to enumerate the "articles of the faith" as the constant tradition of the Church presented them. Elsewhere I have endeavoured to give a conspectus of those different types of explanation of the eucharist which we find in the ancient Church.[1] But behind those different attempts at explanation there was the constant realistic faith concerning it, which first finds clear expression in St. Paul. Thus Justin Martyr, in the middle of the second century, in the "apology" for the Christians which he addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, writing of the eucharistic feast of the Church, says:

> "This food is called among us Eucharist, and no one is allowed to partake of it unless he believes that what we teach is true, and has been washed in the laver for the remission of sins and for regeneration, and is living as Christ enjoined. For we do not receive these things as common bread or common drink, but just as Jesus Christ our Saviour, by the word of God made flesh, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so we have been

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[1] *The Body of Christ*, pp. 59 f. (Murray). To this book I must refer for a fuller discussion of all the questions concerning the eucharist.

taught that the food over which thanks have been given by the word of prayer which comes from Him, that food from which our blood and flesh are by assimilation nourished, is both the flesh and the blood of that Jesus who was made flesh."

So Irenaeus writes: "The bread and the mixed cup, receiving upon themselves the word of God, become Eucharist, that is, the body and blood of Christ."[1] That from the first was the faith of the Church about its sacrifice and sacrament.

So also they believed in the sacramental efficacy of the judgements of the Church upon the "mortal" sins of its members, and of its absolutions, as carrying with them the judgement and absolution of Christ. This belief, founded on our Lord's words as St. Paul interpreted them, was the basis of the Church system of penance—later called a sacrament—through all the variations in the use of it. Also they believed in ordination as a sacrament; that is, they believed that through the laying on of the bishop's hands a spiritual gift was really imparted, qualifying a person for ministry in the various grades of office. Also they believed in the indissolubility of marriage in a sense that may be called sacramental, though after the establishment of the Church the principle began to be seriously compromised in the East. And finally, the ceremony of anointing the sick with a view to their recovery, enjoined by St. James, came to be regarded as in some sort sacramental. Thus, though they did not for more than ten centuries talk about seven sacraments,[2] yet all these rites of the Church, environing the life of man with spiritual blessings from the cradle to the grave, were regarded as having in somewhat different senses a sacramental power. But the rites first called "sacraments" (or "mysteries" in Greek) were baptism with confirmation, and the eucharist, and sometimes ordination; and though there were no precise dogmatic definitions,[1] as indeed there were no such denials as evoke definition, the faith in sacraments, as ceremonies of the Church which were instruments of divine gifts, was universal and undisputed. It was inseparable from the Catholic faith and life and it was rooted in the New Testament.

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[1] For references see *Body of Christ*, pp. 4 ff., 81 f.

[2] See above, Appended Note B, p. 769.

V

When we say "I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church" we mean that we believe a visible society, however full of human infirmity, is yet the special organ of the Holy Spirit and of the living Christ in the world. This belief I have sought to vindicate as representing the real intention of our Lord. But here I am only concerned to point out one of its corollaries. A visible society which, because it is to be diffused throughout the world, lacks all the links of fellowship which belong to a nation, must have links of its own; and one of the chief of these was, in fact, a ministry, proceeding down the generations by succession from the apostolic fount, and taking shape in a hierarchy of bishops, presbyters, and deacons in each local church. In the intercommunion of the bishops was to be found the link of Catholic fellowship, and in their due succession the guarantee of continuity. That the ministry of the Church, so constituted, was, with extraordinary unanimity over the whole Christian world, believed to have divine authority, so that membership in the Church could only be maintained by adhering to it, is an undoubted fact of history from the middle of the second century to the period of the Reformation. Its authority ranks with the authority of Scripture and the authority of the Creeds. This fundamental law of order was equated in importance with the fundamental rule of faith. If there is anything on which the "binding" and "loosing" power granted to the Church can be said to have been exercised it is on the necessity of the episcopate. Those teachers who, like Jerome, minimized the difference between bishops and presbyters, as a matter of ecclesiastical arrangement, yet did not doubt that authority had in fact restricted to the bishops the power of granting the ministerial commission. If we take account of the disruptive tendencies of human nature in ancient as in modern times, we must confess that it was the episcopate, and the principle of the apostolic succession, which saved the unity of the Church, so far as it was saved.

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[1] When I say there were no precise definitions I am speaking of the early centuries or the undivided Church. The dogma of transubstantiation was indeed a precise definition, but I have already (briefly above, p. 813, more at length in *Dissertations*, iii, "Transubstantiation and Nihilianism"), given the reasons which seem to me convincing why we should not accept it as a dogma or indeed as a true opinion. It was in the seventeenth century accepted by the Orthodox Church, though in the case of the Russian Church without the accompanying theory of substance and accidents; but it would appear to have been accepted half-heartedly and certainly without following it out to its consequences. I am led to believe that our not accepting it would be no bar to union with the Orthodox Church. And the reasons for not accepting it are fundamental.

As we have seen, Ignatius of Antioch at the beginning of the second century can proclaim the threefold ministry to be (1) necessary to the constitution of a church; (2) an ordinance of the apostles; and (3) as world-wide as the Church itself. It would appear that in this last point he was not quite well informed. There were churches still without a monarchical bishop. And it is an obscure matter exactly how the Church constitution, as Ignatius describes it, developed out of the constitution of the Church as it appears in the Acts and the Pastoral Epistles. But there is really nothing in the New Testament to support the idea that any church had the right to elect and appoint its own officers without the intervention of the apostles, or of those who held quasi-apostolic authority, like Timothy and Titus, to ordain to the ministry with the laying on of hands. Both the evidence and the probability are against it. Thus we have very sure grounds for maintaining that our Lord constituted a ministry in His Church in the persons of apostles; that it acted as a ministry intended to be self-perpetuating; that in fact it took shape in the threefold ministry known to Church history without any signs of confusion or controversy; and that the authority of the Church universal has been as deeply as possible committed to the principle of the apostolic succession.

Elsewhere I have endeavoured at length to develop the evidence. Here I would only say that there is no subject on which it is more necessary to take a wide view of the evidence as a whole, if one is to avoid being misled.

VI

Now we have to consider a quite different part of the Christian faith—that which concerns the life beyond. "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." "I believe in the resurrection of the body [flesh] and the life eternal." There is no question raised that the Catholic Church has held it to be essential to believe that there is an immortal life beyond death, and that this is not merely an immortality of the soul, but a persistence of the whole human personality, body as well as soul, of which the resurrection of Jesus Christ supplied the prototype. There was, however, considerable ambiguity in the way in which this belief was expressed. Had Christ been raised "in the flesh"? St. Paul apparently would say No: He was raised in the body, but not in the flesh; "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." That is to say, he identifies "flesh" with the present corruptible condition of the body. On the other hand, St. John[1] appears to assume a Christ existing still in flesh and blood,[2] though "the flesh" and "blood" have now become "spirit and life." Ignatius, some fifteen years after the appearance of the Fourth Gospel, passionately affirms this. It is thus a question of the definition of words whether we are to speak of the glorified body or of the glorified flesh. But no doubt can be entertained that, in days when, though in some respects there was a high level of enlightenment, there was crass ignorance of what we have come to call "science," it was easy for men to assume that what would happen at the resurrection would be a re-collection of the materials of our present body; and the expression "I believe in the resurrection of the flesh" was, in fact, interpreted and insisted upon in this sense. Even then, however, wiser men, such as Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, refused so gross an idea; and it is probably in deference to such, more rational, opinion that the Nicene Creed when it was enlarged did not contain the words "I expect the resurrection of the flesh" (or even "I expect the resurrection of the body"), but "I expect the resurrection of the dead."

A group of our Modernists to-day have been pressing us with the prevalence in ecclesiastical writers of the grosser view, and endeavouring to claim that it has full Catholic authority, in order to discredit authority altogether. But that is not just: we must always scrutinize current theology in the light of the formally expressed doctrine (where such exists) and of the New Testament. There were, we know, two currents of explanation of the doctrine—the grosser and commoner, and the more refined. And the Church inserted in its most authoritative Creed —the Nicene—an expression which markedly does not commit us to the common view, and justifies us in taking the Western expression "I believe in the resurrection of the flesh" in the sense in which, I suppose, St. John would have adhered to it.

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[1] And St. Peter in Acts ii. 32.

[2] See 2 John 7. Christ is still *to come* in the flesh: see Westcott's note. The permanence of the "flesh" and "blood" of Christ is also assumed in some sense in John vi., and the flesh and blood there spoken of are declared to be the flesh and blood of the ascended and glorified Christ, and are therefore to be thought of as "spirit and life" (ver. 62–3). St. Paul and St. John do not differ substantially at all.

But it is even more important to appeal to the New Testament, and especially to St. Paul, who alone has expounded at length what he would have us understand by the resurrection of the body, and has expounded it in a sense which certainly does not suggest the re-collection of the material atoms. St. Paul, then, does not attempt to analyse what happens to the body after death or at the resurrection scientifically; and he is not concerned (as we shall see) with the "intermediate state" of the disembodied soul at all; but he contemplates in all cases a transition from our present "natural" and corruptible bodies to the condition of what he calls the "spiritual body." This, no doubt, on the pattern of our Lord's, he conceives of as material; but the materiality must be such as would be no impediment to spirit: that is, we must suppose, it is a refined sort of materiality, in which matter is wholly the vehicle and subservient instrument of spirit, as appears in the Gospels to have been the case with our Lord's risen body.[1] St. Paul speaks quite indefinitely, however. But he insists that in all cases the transition from the natural to the spiritual body will take place. "We shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed,"[2] and he contemplates three different cases of this transition: the case of our Lord, whose body saw no corruption, but was transmuted within the period when He lay in the grave ; the case of those who are to be alive at the Coming, which he still hoped would be his own case, for whom he contemplates—using vague words, as about a "mystery"—a sudden transformation "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" ; and the case of those who have died and been buried, and whose bodies have therefore presumably rotted in the grave. And in their case the language he uses does not at all suggest the re-collection of material particles, but, as in the case of the seed corn, the continuity of a vital principle clothed by God in a new embodiment. So we will boldly, with St. Paul, hold to the faith in "the resurrection of dead men" as the Creed expresses it, or "the resurrection of the body" as St. Paul suggests it, interpreting in this sense the more Johannine phrase "the resurrection of the flesh," without for the moment allowing ourselves to be encumbered with notions derived from a pre-scientific age, and without any claim to understand by what exact method what we believe in will be accomplished.

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[1] See *Belief in God*, pp. 268–9, and the whole section pp. 262 ff.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 51.

Surely we should rejoice to recognize that in believing, not in the immortality of a bare soul, but in the resurrection of the whole person, we are in harmony with the spirit of science. For science, in the true sense, shows us such an intimate dependence of spirit on body in man as to make the idea of purely disembodied spirits very difficult. We have lost, or ought to have lost, all the old Greek and Oriental horror of the body as such. What we look for is the perfecting of the whole creation for the fulfilment of spiritual purpose, through whatever final catastrophe. "Nature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God" ; and for these sons of God what we look forward to is indeed a glory unimaginable, when He who is our Redeemer, at His final coming or manifestation, shall have "fashioned anew our bodies of humiliation that they may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself." The figures in which His coming is described to us are doubtless symbolic, but its essential and moral meaning is unmistakable.

Almost all the Christian outlook upon the life to come in the New Testament is directed to the great end. We are assured of personal immortality in its completest sense, but its completion is associated with the Last Day, the Day of Resurrection and the world to come. Generally the resurrection is spoken of in the joyful sense in which it is to happen to those who are "in Christ." But in our Lord's parable of the Day of Judgement, and in the Fourth Gospel, and in the Apocalypse we hear of a resurrection of those who have rejected Christ and God, of the unjust as well as the just, and St. Paul appears to anticipate the same.[1] And if we are to give serious meaning to the words of our Lord—none the less awful because figurative—and of St. Paul and St. John, we must recognize a final assessment of all human lives, a final judgement of God, and an awful possibility of final and irretrievable condemnation.[2] Life is essentially probation. Acts form habits and habits form character and character tends to become fixed. And there seems to be bound up with the reality of responsibility the possibility that the personal will may so identify itself with evil as to have lost at the last the faculty for good, and to have become finally incompatible with God. In such a case, to recall the tremendous words of Isaiah, the near coming of the divine holiness has become intolerable and elicits nothing but the cry, "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"[1] The consideration of this horrible possibility of final ruin and misery chills us to our very bones and is meant to chill us. For my own part, I cannot understand how anyone, who considers human nature broadly, can doubt that in moments of almost irresistible temptation, when yet we have time and will to think, the thought of the infinite and timeless issues of wilful sin—the undying worm and the unquenchable fire—has, and is meant to have, an overpowering effect upon us. "Fear him," said our Lord, "who after he has killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." And the repudiation of this sort of fear seems to me to be one of the silliest features in modern religion.

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[1] St. Matt. xxv. 31 ff.; John v. 28–9; Apoc. xx. 11 ff.; Rom. ii. 5–16, xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10.

[2] I have endeavoured to summarize conclusions and give references on this tremendous subject in *Expos. of Romans*, vol. ii, App. C, p. 210.

The imagination of men from very early days occupied itself in drawing gruesome pictures of hell, which to-day revolt us or make us laugh; and doctrines which condemned men to hell—unbaptized infants, or all the non-Christian world, or all the non-elect, or all who, however sincerely, had reached heretical conclusions—in such indiscriminate fashion as to be wholly contrary to justice, have discredited the very idea of hell, so that now popular Christianity appears almost to have "left it out." But it is there in the authentic teaching of Christ and in the innermost testimony of the enlightened conscience. There is language in St. Paul about "eternal destruction," and language which seems to identify the ultimate issue of things with the absolute and universal triumph of good—when God shall be "all in all"—which has made some thoughtful men conceive that the state of the lost may carry with it the ultimate dissolution of personality and personal consciousness. For my own part, I thankfully accept this as a possibility. "Eternal" does not always mean "everlasting," and "eternal fire" is only strictly interpreted in terms of everlasting time in the images of the Apocalypse,[1] where temporal images are almost always to be translated into non-temporal ideas, if we are to understand them truly. So I cherish this hope, finding the idea of actually everlasting torment unthinkable.

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[1] Isa. xxxiii. 14.

But this is an uncertain interpretation. What is of the greatest importance is that we should recall the attention of men to the awful warnings of our Lord as to the ultimate possibility of self-chosen ruin, calling to mind at the same time that we know the character of Him who is to judge the quick and dead, and that we cannot associate with Him injustice or inconsiderateness, or any refusal to do the best possible for every soul that He has created; and, for the rest, to acknowledge our ignorance and the absence of any attempt on the part of the undivided Church, in spite of a great deal of provocation, to define authoritatively what is to be understood by "eternal punishment."[2]

Certainly the belief in the ultimate judgements to be passed on all human souls at the Last Day has a tremendous effect on human life. That, however, has come to seem far off, and meanwhile human curiosity has largely exercised itself not on those ultimate issues, but on the immediate future after death. How is it with those I love, who have departed this life, here and now? Do they know what is happening to us on earth? Can I speak to them or in any way reach them? And imperfect as they were, are they not still under education and cleansing?

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[1] Apoc. xx. 10.

[2] It is certain that universalism—which I hold to be really incompatible with the New Testament—was very prevalent in the East, and yet received no formal condemnation by any Council, except in connexion with Origen's idea of pre-existence, which was condemned at the Council which formulated the XV anathemas; but there was hardly any consideration given to conditional immortality in any form.

And to all such questions there is in the New Testament and in the early tradition very little answer. The blessed dead are in "Paradise," or in "Abraham's bosom." These phrases, taken over by our Lord from the later Jewish tradition, were retained and loved by the early Church. Again, St. Paul assures us they "have fallen asleep in Jesus," and are "the Lord's" as much as those who are alive, and are "with Christ" in some "far better" sense than we are in this world.[1] And their sleep is plainly not unconsciousness. The "spirits of just men" have been "made perfect,"[2] though they still await their consummation at the resurrection of the just. It was in view of this consummation that St. Paul prayed for his apparently dead friend Onesiphorus, "The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day."[3] And the early Church prayed unhesitatingly and abundantly for the dead, but in a sense which suggests always that rest and light and peace and refreshment are the thoughts which were associated with Paradise. As to the occupations and interests of the departed we are told nothing. If there is a providential purpose in the silence of Scripture, it is plain that it is not intended for us to have our minds preoccupied with the state of the dead. Our main business is to be with the building of the Kingdom in this world.

From very early times, however, as was natural, men's minds were directed to the question whether, imperfect as even good Christians are when they die, the state of the dead must not be a state of being purified, and whether purification must not be relatively painful.[1] On this matter there was a good deal of speculation, beginning with Clement of Alexandria. A number of the Fathers from Clement and Origen to Jerome and Gregory of Nyssa were "universalists"—that is, they hoped that all would ultimately be saved—and for them the idea of hell was that of a shorter or longer cleansing by fire. But this was certainly neither in Scripture nor in tradition. The tradition, as Origen states it, was simply that in the world to come the souls of men, clothed in their spiritual bodies, will inherit eternal life or suffer eternal punishment according to their works. And there was a further speculation, based (surely) on a misunderstanding of the phrase "saved yet so as by fire," as to a cleansing of all alike in the fire of the Great Day.[2] These were speculations. And we cannot but speculate. It seems an inevitable conclusion of reason that the intermediate state must be somehow a state of cleansing, and cleansing must be somehow painful. But the fact remains that Scripture is silent on the subject and the authoritative tradition of the Church. There were those, on the other hand, who held that souls at death are *suddenly* changed into the wholly good or wholly evil. Augustine, as has been shown, in whom the idea of a purgatory for the imperfect *in the intermediate state* first clearly appears, plainly knew that there was no tradition behind him. He believes in purgatory, but he says "it is not incredible," it is a matter of "perhaps."[3]

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[1] 1 Thess. iv. 14; Rom. xiv. 8–9; Phil. i. 23.

[2] Heb. xii. 23.

[3] 2 Tim. i. 16–18.

I have said something about the way in which

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[1] Origen, *de Princip.* i, praef. 5.

[2] See above, p. 818.

[3] It must not be left out of sight that, though all the emphasis in the New Testament is laid on the day of salvation being "now" and "the time" being "short," yet in 1 Pet. iii. 18—iv. 6, we have an intimation, so far distinct, that waiting souls in the unseen world, rebellious though they had been, could still hear the gospel and live. If it was possible in their case, may it not be so in that of others?

Gregory the Great, in the light of his blood-curdling visions, laid the basis of the mediaeval Western belief in purgatory, as a place where the temporal punishment due to our forgiven sins has to be expiated in torments; and there was superimposed upon this the doctrine that the power of the Church in dispensing "the treasury of merits" could extend "indulgences," that is, remissions of temporal punishment, even into the unseen world. These twin doctrines had a portentous effect; they altered the whole character of the Church's outlook upon the world of the faithful departed, and added enormously to the idea of the Church's power—with results which we all know. But certainly neither in Scripture nor in tradition is to be found the ground for either the doctrine of purgatory or the doctrine of indulgences applicable to the dead.[1] Accordingly they cannot be part of the authoritative faith.

There are many things we should like to know, which apparently the divine wisdom has not thought it good that we should know. We cannot doubt that the departed pray for us. If they are conscious and in Christ, we feel it cannot be otherwise. The great saints who have fought the Church's battle and cared for her with all their souls cannot forget her in their prayers in Paradise. Thus surely the Church has most rightly prayed to God that we might be helped by the intercession of the saints and of the Virgin Mother; and that such prayers were left out of our service-books at the Reformation is indeed lamentable. Defect is certainly no less culpable than excess. And if the mediaeval cultus of the saints was excessive, our neglect of their communion has been equally hard to pardon. There is, however, no sign in the New Testament of the direct invocation of saints and martyrs. A word to indicate that the first Christians asked the prayers of Stephen and James, the first martyrs, would have seemed natural. But it is not there. There are early inscriptions on tombs, such as "Gentianus, pray for us; for we know that thou art in Christ," which are instinctive and touching, and invocation began to become a common practice in the fourth century. It is surely not to be condemned, provided we recognize that the knowledge which could have authoritatively sanctioned it is withheld from us. And though we should delight to acknowledge the glory of the Virgin Mother and the Saints, it must be owned that their cultus in the Middle Ages was built up largely on a basis of mythology and quite unhistorical imagination,[1] and admitted features of the pagan tradition with a dangerous freedom. So much is admitted by all careful scholars. We do not need to attempt to lay natural piety in fetters; but we do need to preserve the type of New Testament devotion.

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[1] There is an interesting article in *Theology*, No. 41, November 1923, by Mr. A. Lewis Innes, on "The Intermediate State." But our best book, as I have said, is Dr. Arthur Mason's *Purgatory*, etc. (Longmans). Even if we do not agree with all his opinions, we find there all the most relevant passages from the Fathers carefully translated and commented upon.

I should add that among the elements which Origen enumerates, in his summary of the tradition of doctrine received from the apostles, is the belief in good and evil spirits and their influence upon men —"that every rational soul is a free agent, plotted against by evil spirits and comforted by good angels, but in no wise constrained."[2] This element in the tradition certainly represents the teaching of the apostles and of our Lord Himself, and there is no rational ground for treating it with contempt.

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[1] Cf. *Belief in God*, p. 261. I cannot see any ground for believing that the later habit of the Church—to canonize certain persons as saints, thus anticipating the judgement of the Great Day—is within its legitimate functions. It is quite another thing to let natural gratitude and devotion mark out certain people as saints, and to desire to have their prayers.

[2] Origen, as above, summarized.

And now I have perhaps sufficiently fulfilled my task of enumerating, as Origen did long ago, the items of the doctrinal tradition of the Catholic Church, which it claimed to have received from the apostles, and which are certainly confirmed in the New Testament. Speculation in ancient days sometimes ranged widely beyond the limits of tradition ; but we hold fast to the contention of the ancient Church that nothing which was not in the original tradition can be laid upon the faithful as a dogmatic requirement. The function of the Church with regard to the tradition is to defend it and to explicate it, but not to add to it.

With regard to Church discipline in matters of practice, with which we have not been directly concerned, the case is different. Here the Church was always believed to have a freer hand. It could legislate with a much greater freedom in view of the requirements of the times ; and it could freely alter or ignore the decisions of even ecumenical councils where circumstances had changed or the earlier decisions been found impracticable. So it was that the prohibition of the translation of bishops from see to see, and the prohibition of kneeling at Easter, passed into desuetude. And we should cling to the assertion of our Article that "Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying." Thus in fact the Anglican Church not only allows a married clergy, contrary to the previously attempted discipline of the Western Church, but also, contrary to the ancient canons, allows the clergy to marry after ordination. All this, I believe on the whole, was "done to edifying." Even disciplinary rules enacted by the apostles need not be regarded as permanently obligatory, such, for instance, as St. Paul's regulation of women's dress and his exclusion of the twice-married from the clergy. And canonical legislation can pass into desuetude as well as be formally abrogated. Nevertheless great reverence is surely due to Catholic customs and canons, in proportion to their universality. We may respectfully ask whether it was not presumptuous on the part of both East and West to abandon the apostolic rite of the laying on of the bishop's hands in confirmation, and equally presumptuous on the part of the Western Church to abandon, contrary to what was plainly our Lord's own intention, the administration of the chalice to the communicants at the altar. And the general and needless disregard of Catholic customs amongst ourselves has surely been most culpable. But I will not pursue the subject, which is not really that with which we set out to occupy ourselves.

I conclude with two remarks: (1) In the conspectus which I have been seeking to give of the doctrinal tradition as it was recognized of old, the conclusion at which we arrived in a previous chapter has been constantly taken for granted—that it is a mistaken idea of doctrinal development to suppose that it consists, or ought to consist, in the gradual accumulation of dogmas by a logical or quasi-logical process of deduction. In substance the revelation was once given and has never been augmented. The thinkers and saints of the Church may ponder and speculate, and pious opinions may be uttered and pass into vogue. But as far as concerns the authoritative revelation, what the ancients did not in substance know cannot become part of it, nor what is not really affirmed or implied in the New Testament. This, we saw, is the safeguard of intellectual liberty for the individual, and leaves the Church free to enter each new age and country unencumbered by anything except the original message. And the justification of the appeal to antiquity lies also in this: the Church started on its career, and maintained it for three centuries or longer, in marked distinction from the world or the State. After Church and State became one, a fusion took place the effect of which is unmistakable. It is right we should call the early centuries "the pure centuries," in the sense that in them the current of Church life and teaching was running substantially distinct.

(2) The Church has allowed a place of unique authority to the General Councils. It has been often said that "the authority of the Church diffusive is no less binding than that of the Church collective."[1] But this is not quite the case. The authority of the ecumenical councils has a pre-eminence, because there a particular doctrine, which had already agitated the Church and been very fully discussed, was brought into distinct light, and the collective mind of the Church was brought to bear upon it, in a sense which gives their decisions an importance and precision which uncontested tradition cannot quite reach.

APPENDED NOTE (see p. 911)

ON THE FIFTH AND SEVENTH GENERAL COUNCILS

The most handy volume to begin with for the study of the General Councils is *The Seven Ecumenical Councils* in the "Nicene and Ante-Nicene Fathers," by Dr. H. R. Percival (Oxford: James Parker, 1920). No one reading the documents and history concerning the fifth Council will find them very edifying. But, as I have said, in substance it added nothing to the definition of Ephesus, while accepting Chalcedon. It only aimed at rehabilitating the theological reputation of St. Cyril.

The only doubtful question which arises out of it is the question whether the great Origen was condemned by the Council in a string of heretics. This is probable but not certain. There are strong arguments against it (see *op. cit.*, p. 314). Anyway, we must agree with Hefele that "the XV anathematisms against Origen" cannot be attributed to this Council. And, when we read them, we shall feel that it is only a phantom of the real Origen which was under the consideration of whatever council issued them. The specific opinions then condemned there are few to-day who could be found to maintain. And it is remarkable that Origen's opinions concerning Holy Scripture are not noticed, nor is his belief in the final restoration of all souls repudiated except in connexion with his belief in their pre-existence, before they became human beings.

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[1] I assented to this proposition in *Roman Catholic Claims*, p. 55.

The seventh Council is very explicit that God "wholly and alone is to be worshipped and revered with adoration" (p. 541); that icons are to be made only of Christ as He appeared in the flesh, and of the angels who appeared as men to men, and of the saints. All the misleading pictures of the Holy Trinity as three men, or two men and a dove, which are so sadly common in the West, or of the Father as an old man, are apparently contrary to the decrees of the Council. And as to the proper attitude of Christians to the icons we read—

> "To these should be given due salutation and honourable reverence (*ἀσπασμόν καὶ τιμητικὴν προσκύνησιν*), not indeed the true worship of faith (*λατρείαν*), which belongs only to the divine nature; but to these, as to the figure of the precious and life-giving cross, and to the book of the Gospels, and to the other holy objects, incense and lights may be presented according to ancient pious custom.[1] For the honour which is paid to the image passes on to that which the image represents, and he who reveres the image reveres in it the subject represented" (p. 550).

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[1] This, as Bishop Basil of Ancyra said at the Council, was customary also with images of the emperors, when they were sent to cities or rural districts, in order to honour not the image but the emperor himself (p. 535).

CHAPTER X

THE TEST OF RATIONAL COHERENCE

IN the last chapter I have sought, like Origen, simply to enumerate the "articles of the faith" which constitute Catholicism, considered as an intellectual system, and I have endeavoured to proceed by purely objective tests. These enumerated doctrines have behind them in history the whole weight of Catholic authority and of Scripture, as well as the wider assent of Christian experience. But there are many such articles of belief; and the sensitive modern spirit is apt at once to catch fire and protest with vehemence that it is impossible to expect agreement on so many theological propositions. It is in anticipation of such a protest that I now want to bring into prominence a consideration which is reassuring to our nervous critical reason—viz. that the propositions enumerated turn out not to be really many, but in principle one, so that in accepting one we are accepting all, or at least in accepting the root doctrine about God and man we are led on to feel that the rest cohere indiscerptibly with it. This idea of solidarity is of course conveyed by the term "articles of the faith." For "article" means first a little limb or joint, a component element in a living whole, and in its transferred sense, as meaning an element in an intellectual system, it retains the notion of solidarity as between one element and another. So Chrysostom says of the Christian faith that, granted the Incarnation, all the rest "follows in rational sequence."[1]

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[1] *In Matt. Hom.* ii, *P.G.* lvii, 27, τούτου δὲ γενομένου, τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα ἅπαντα κατὰ λόγον καὶ ἀκολουθίαν ἕπεται.

This test of rational coherence, considered as an evidence of truth, is of course subordinate to other tests—the test of experience, the test of historical evidence for historical statements, the test of agreement with the whole of our knowledge, and the test of authority; but it is in itself an important and illuminating consideration which it is worth while to pursue.

I

We must begin then with the idea of God which the first volume of this series strove to vindicate.[1] When Christianity came out into the world it found, as we saw, a monotheism of a kind in occupation of the minds of the intelligent. It was the Stoic pantheism, the doctrine of the immanence of the divine reason. Some doctrine of divine immanence Christianity, in the persons of St. Paul and St. John, showed its readiness to assimilate, as indeed Judaism had already claimed it for its own; but only as subsidiary to the doctrine of God which it inherited from the Hebrew prophets. This is the conception of God as not only in the world but over the world and prior to it, in independent perfection, the absolute creator of all that is, personal in the profoundest sense and possessing definite character, being in Himself essentially righteous and good. For this distinctive doctrine of God, and not merely for some kind of monotheism—which might sound more Christian than it really was—the early apologists found themselves constrained to struggle. They were surely quite right. It is on this doctrine that Christianity as a whole depends. Granted this, the whole follows in "rational sequence"; and if this is not adhered to, the whole fabric crumbles.

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[1] But see Appended Note, p. 954, "The Rationality of the Belief in the Christian Doctrine of God."

And there is bound up with this Biblical idea of God a certain idea of man—that rational man is not part of God, nor essential to the being of God, but a creature of God, absolutely dependent upon His will; so that, however great the distinction in dignity may be between man and the irrational creation of which he is the crown, the distinction is not comparable to that which lies between the only one self-subsistent being, God the Creator, and everything else that exists—the creatures of His will and love.

On the other hand, man has been highly exalted. He was created in God's "image and likeness," that is, a rational being with a limited but real freedom, which God has allowed even to condition and restrict the action of His own almightiness. He has placed man in a sense as His vicegerent in the world, and has enabled him to co-operate in His divine purpose—the Kingdom of God. That is his great vocation. But man's freedom is ambiguous—it involves not only the opportunity of correspondence but also the opportunity of lawlessness or rebellion. And in fact mankind has on the widest scale and with the utmost universality so asserted his self-will against God's will as violently to disorder the moral world, and, superficially at least, the physical world which he in a measure controls.

This idea of human nature is inseparable from the Biblical conception of God. Both ideas are set before us with majestic simplicity under symbolical forms in the early chapters of Genesis, are continually emphasized and developed in the tradition of prophetic teaching, and form the foundation of our Lord's teaching and of the New Testament. It seems to me that the whole intellectual problem of belief is summed up in the acceptance of this doctrine of God and of man without which the Bible goes for nothing. Granted this, all is in sequence.

I always experience a slight shiver when I read in modern books about Christianity being essentially Christocentric. It is true, no doubt, that God has revealed Himself finally in Christ, but Christ always points us beyond Himself to the Father—to God; and faith in God did not begin with the historical Christ; and the object of Christ's manifestation, when He came, was that in the fullest sense our "faith and hope might be in God."

I say, then, grant the fundamental Biblical conception of God and man, and the whole Christian creed follows, and makes its rational appeal to us as one coherent unity. The appalling disorder of God's creation which sin has introduced—and dimly in the background we discern forces of rebellion other than human—demands the redemptive action of God. This again is an idea which pervades the Bible. And the conception of redemption is that of a re-creative activity of God—the activity of a Creator, free to take action to prevent the ruin of His work. As I have argued earlier, if God be simply the soul of the world, the immanent spirit of its order, it may be contended *a priori* (whatever that argument would be worth) that the divine action cannot be anything else than an inevitable development of this natural order. But certainly no such argument can hold if God is not only in the world but over it, independent and personal, and free from every restriction except what lies in His own perfection. In a unique emergency He can, on the analogy of every rational being, act uniquely. So it is that the summary act of divine redemption in Christ is presented as miraculous—as a re-creative act of God vindicating His original purpose. "I will up, saith the Lord." It is this conception of redemptive love which makes the evidence for the miracles of the Gospel intelligible and credible.

In this connexion I would call attention to a criticism of my earlier argument which seems to me both interesting and strange[1]:

> "If Dr. Gore's work has one inherent defect . . . it is that he is over-ready to treat the claim of the historical critics as merely what it professes to be, the claim of impartial students of fact, and to suppose that when he has met that claim, he has disposed of the whole Modernist case. As a matter of fact, historical criticism is always more or less a philosophy in disguise, and, though Dr. Gore very truly points this out, he hardly does justice to the philosophy in question. . . . Insisting on the uniformity of the natural sequences which govern events, it may reconcile the uniformity with belief in God, by urging that God's method of action is the penetration of what is natural and human from within, not interference with it from without. A Christian interpretation of the doctrine of immanence will go on to point out that the method of penetration without intervention is peculiarly consonant with the conception of God as love, and of His supreme self-revelation as taking place in and through a natural human life. But it must hesitate to accept anything in the nature of a miracle strictly so-called, because this seems to imply a direct intervention from without upon the natural order, the idea of which is alien to its religious philosophy."

And the writer goes on to intimate that the Modernists' philosophy may be interpreted as more congruous than any other with the conception of God as essentially *love*.

> "It can see the Godhead incarnate and supremely revealed in the human goodness of Jesus Christ and in the love which suffered, unsaved by any miraculous intervention, upon Calvary, but not in an apparent breach of the natural order of human birth, or in the resuscitation of a dead body. . . . Such things, it maintains, are alien both to the apparent constitution of the world and to the method and character of love pure and supreme."

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[1] Canon Oliver C. Quick in the *Quarterly Review*, October 1923, p. 380.

Now, there are phrases in this interesting passage—which, I do not forget, expresses not the point of view of the writer, but a point of view, different from his own, which he is representing—which would demand detailed criticism. I deprecate the phrase "interference from without" because the miracles of the Gospel are rather represented as the action of the Holy Spirit working from within; and the word "resuscitation" is not at all the word to describe the transformation in the case of Jesus of the natural into the spiritual body. But I have reproduced the passage not to criticize details. What I wish to criticize is simply the main idea that the purely immanental conception of the action of God is more congruous than any other with the idea of His love. And I write with feeling, because all my life has been a struggle to believe that God—the only God—is love. That is to me, as to many other men, not only the governing dogma of the Christian religion, but the only really difficult dogma. It has its source in the Bible, and nowhere else is it affirmed with the same courage of assurance. And in the Bible, I contend, it is wholly bound up with the conception of God as transcendent and sovereign, over and beyond nature. There are marks of goodness in nature to which our Lord and St. Paul call our attention, as signs of the goodwill of "your Father which is in heaven," or of the sovereign Creator. But it is not chiefly to them that appeal is made. "Herein is love . . . that God sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins," or "to be the saviour of the world." If we think of our Lord's teaching in the parables about God's love, we find it represented as something free and personal, bound by no restrictive law—the shepherd's preference for the one sheep at the risk of the ninety and nine, the father's preference for the prodigal son, which provoked the rational remonstrance of the elder brother. If we consider it, all His teaching about God is found to be naïvely on the lines of the sovereign Being, without the suggestion of immanence. It is "your Father which is in heaven." If at the great crisis He is not to be saved from death, it is not that the Father could not or would not do it, but that He Himself will not ask for it.

Then outside the Gospels, the New Testament identifies the original assurance of the revelation of God in Christ with the evidences of His resurrection. Without this, it appears, no gospel of divine love would have gone out into the world. This it was "that marked Him out in power as the Son of God." This gave the disciples their "assurance" of His lordship. "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." "God raised him from the dead and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God." Can it be seriously contended that if the supposed event was an illusion, the value of that assurance would remain? Also can it be doubted that, through the whole New Testament, the conception of God's love in Christ is wholly bound up with the conception of God as coming forth in a great re-creative act, from beyond the process of nature, in which the miracles were a natural feature?

Then leaving the ancient sources of witness, and coming to our own day, surely it is just in respect of God being love that the conception of the immanent God—God in the process of nature—proves to be so defective. I scrutinize great nature anxiously and find it full of ambiguity. I cross-question the philosophers of immanence and the poets of nature and get no satisfaction. I do not say I could not retain a hope that the great inscrutable power which works in nature might turn out to be good. But I do say that any confidence of faith depends on a belief in the transcendence and liberty of God. It is such a God we need as can come forth to re-create and renew what sin has so deeply defaced and spoilt. It is such a God as can do a new thing, because a desperate situation demands it, and the "process of nature" is inadequate to remedy it. And if the Christ is this unique thing, the Divine Saviour come into the world in our nature, it seems to me most natural to believe that when sin murdered Him, God should vindicate Him; and that the birth of Him who was not only man but the New Man, should have been signalized by discontinuity as well as continuity with the humanity out of which He emerged.[1]

II

Well, then, I contend that the fundamental Biblical conceptions of God and of man and of the result of sin in disordering the world lead naturally on to the belief in a divine act of redemption which has miraculous accompaniments. Viewed in its total effect, this redemptive activity of God is not contrary to nature, but is the reconstitution of nature in its proper relation to God, actually in the region of the redeemed humanity and potentially in the whole world. And it is not contrary to the idea of a gradual development of divine purpose in the world. Quite otherwise: what it has done is only to effect the removal of what made the actual development something even grotesquely unlike the divine purpose. "Grace is not contrary to nature, but is rather the restoration of nature." Nevertheless grace, the personal action of divine love, postulates a God who is not enslaved to His own ordered method, but can act freely.

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[1] In answer to a note of Canon Quick's on p. 381, I would say I thankfully believe that *God is love* as *God is spirit* and *God is light*; and that we should hardly say *God is justice* or *God is power*, because justice and power appear to be modes of action or attributes of Him whose essence is "love" and "spirit" and "light." But I decline altogether to identify love with purely "natural" processes. Love has always and specially the capacity for doing something over and above the ordinary.

And the same Biblical conception of God leads us on to approve the Catholic conception of the incarnate person, Jesus Christ, as it gains expression in the New Testament and as it finds definition in the Creeds and Councils. Christ is the Word or Son of God, incarnate. Thus He is the mediator between God and man—but because He is both God and man. There can be no middle term between the Creator and the creature. There can be no demi-god. If the Son, Jesus Christ, is to be worshipped as God, and if by union with Him we are united to God, then He must have come personally from beyond the fathomless depth which in idea separates the one creative nature from the creatures. He must belong essentially to the one divine being. He must be of one substance with the Father. That is the verdict against Arius. And again, if He is—as the Gospels show Him to be—truly and completely man, that must be "not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person," by the taking of manhood into God. No conception of Christ as becoming God, or as gaining for us the values of God because He is perfect man, is consistent with our root conception. The nature of man, the creature, is godlike and can therefore become the organ of God. But it can never become the nature of God the Creator. The two natures must remain in their fundamental distinction. What we welcome then is the conception of God, who had made man in His own image, remaining God, but for our redemption taking unto Himself our nature and living and acting and suffering, by a divine self-suppression, as man, so as to redeem him from within. And no formula can be found to guard the reality of Deity and the reality of manhood in the unity of one person but the Catholic formula.

So with the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in Unity. I have very often repeated the suggestion that in the process of divine self-disclosure the doctrine of the Trinity was "overheard rather than heard." There was no moment of proclamation. In the process of experiencing redemption men found themselves believing in God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. So we find the idea of the Trinity implicit in the New Testament, and, after delays and hesitations and many bungling attempts at formulation, made explicit to the mind of the Church. The Church, one must acknowledge, though it believed that the name of the One God had become the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, as a matter of experienced fact, yet found it very difficult to express the truth, even inadequately. Nevertheless, however imperfectly it admits of being expressed in human language, the conception of God as subsisting in three "persons" has proved to be the only conception of God which can make us able even remotely to conceive of God, as our fundamental Biblical faith demands that we should conceive of Him, as alive and personal, independently of nature and prior to nature, and the creator of all that is. For will and thought and love, which are the essential qualities of personality, have no meaning for us except in the relation of the individual subject to another. Will and thought and love alike demand an object. And the only way in which men have found themselves able to think of God in Himself, as eternally alive in the fullness of personal life, is by welcoming the glimpse into His eternal Being which the process of redemption has given them, and finding there the reality of an eternal fellowship in which the Father expresses Himself eternally in the Son and in the Spirit, and finds the reciprocity which will and thought and love demand. Only so can we avoid the fatal weaknesses, intellectual and moral, of the conception of a God dependent upon nature for self-expression and consciousness.[1]

Once again, the Biblical conception of God seems to lead inevitably to the anticipation of a "Last Day" or "End of the World." No doubt the vision of the End in the New Testament—the great catastrophe of nature, the rending sky, the angel-messengers, the form of the Son of Man descending in majesty to judge the world, the last trump, the multitudes of humanity of all the ages gathering for judgement, the opened books, the final verdict, and the localized heaven and hell—all this is symbolical. Apparently we can only be taught in symbolical forms about the things which lie outside our present possible experience. But the symbols enshrine a necessary truth—the truth that God is to come into His own at last in the whole creation, and the truth that it is in the historical Jesus that He does so come into His own. God has a purpose in all history. That is one of the great contributions to the thought of humanity which we owe to the Hebrew prophets. This purpose has been flouted and thwarted by sin. Nevertheless as God is God, so at last He must vindicate Himself, and in Jesus is to be found not only the central point in history, but its goal.

III

In intimate coherence with the Biblical doctrine of God is, as I have said, its doctrine about man. It gives no place for foolish pride. Man is purely a creature and, as such, absolutely dependent. But the position of man is as far as possible from being abject. He is made in the image of God. He is destined for co-operation with God and for sonship. God deals with man not as an arbitrary autocrat with a slave, but as a father with his children. "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me." "Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" Job's indignant questioning of God, based on the deep-lying assumption that, if he can only get to God, He will listen to his reasonable and just plea, is treated as meritorious, not as insolent. In our Lord's teaching the tone is never autocratic—it seems to be taken for granted that, if only men are sincere and openhearted to the light, they will welcome what He says as right and true. The true type of Christian authority must, as we said, always make its appeal so as to commend itself to the conscience and reason of men. Personal responsibility and freedom, wherein lies man's true dignity, is not to be destroyed. If souls are to be finally lost, that is only because they have used their divinely given prerogative of freedom to harden themselves into an obstinate refusal of the light. There is to be no absolute compulsion even to save man from ruin. There is no imperious grace or divine call which *cannot* be resisted. The paradox always remains in the theology that is really Christian: "Work out your own salvation; for it is God who worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure"; or again, Accept the Church's message as what it is in truth, the word of God who cannot lie; but accept it because your own heart and conscience and reason tell you it is true.

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[1] See *Belief in God*, pp. 69 ff., 148 ff.

The whole of Catholic theology at its best is full of this two-sided conception of man as both an absolutely dependent creature, and also a son and not a slave.

There is another feature in the Biblical doctrine about man in his relation to God which seems to me fundamentally to determine our attitude in favour of Catholic theology—that is, its treatment of man as individual, with the responsibility of an individual, but also as social; so that God deals with him not as a man only but as man. As we know, it is only gradually that the sense of individuality emerges in the Old Testament; but it does emerge decisively, and the New Testament is full of the sense of the individuality of men and of the responsibility and equal spiritual worth of all individual men. But the sense that mankind is also a social and corporate unity is never weakened. Thus it is impossible to read the New Testament and not feel the bearing of this both on man's sin and on his redemption. Sin lies in the will; its seat and source is moral; it is man's fault, not his nature, and the secret of guilt is not to be found in the material body. All this tends to emphasize individual responsibility. We are bound to say that only where individual knowledge and responsibility begin does personal guilt begin. Nevertheless, alike in the Old Testament and in the New, behind the individual is the nation and the race. It is mankind that is sinful, and every individual is born into a sinful world. This double aspect of man, individual and social, appears in the moderate Catholic doctrine of original and racial sin, which, I have contended, really corresponds with the facts of experience[1]; it also appears in the doctrine of redemption. The redemption is corporate. Christ is the new Man, the second Adam, the head of a new race, which in purpose and intention is to extend to all the world. So it is potentially on behalf of the whole race, and effectively for all who will believe in Him, that Christ acts as the Redeemer. Thus our corporate redemption has its root in the great representative act of sacrifice and reparation to God by which the new covenant of God with man is inaugurated. "He taketh away" (by expiation) "the sin of the world," and not merely the sins of the individuals. He is "the propitiation for the whole world."[1] So it is ideally that mankind is redeemed by Christ as a race; and actually the covenant is with the Church of the believers, and in the doctrine of the Church and the sacraments is found the sanction and the security of corporate redemption. Corporately man is fallen and corporately he is to be redeemed.

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, chap. ix, p. 552.

So it is, I think, that doctrines which look at first sight as if they were detached propositions—like the teaching of heaven and hell, and the teaching about original sin, and the doctrine of the virgin birth and the vicarious atonement, and the doctrine of the Church and the sacraments—are seen all to cohere with one another by having their common root in the fundamental Biblical conception of man in himself and in his relation to God. The doctrine of hell is a necessary corollary of his indestructible freedom; original sin is the expression of human solidarity; the fact of the virgin birth coheres with the fact of Christ as the second Adam, the new man, both continuous and discontinuous with the old humanity; the vicarious reparation corresponds to the idea of Christ as acting on behalf of all of us who are to be reborn in Him; the Church and the sacraments express again the solidarity of man. Men are not to be saved as individuals by themselves.

Once more the fundamental Biblical idea of creation involves a high estimate of the physical creation and the human body. Whatever God made was "very good." The Oriental and Hellenistic idea of matter as somehow evil, and of association with the material body as the source of pollution to the soul, is quite alien to the Bible. Sin is rebellion, and its seat is in the will. Once the will is brought back to its right relation to God, the whole body is on the way of redemption. So when the thought of

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[1] John i. 29; 1 John ii. 2.

God's justice, and the sense of the fellowship with God into which the individual soul is admitted, forced the Jew forward to believe in life beyond the grave, his faith took shape in a belief not in the immortality of the bare soul, but in the resurrection of the body. And the actual resurrection of Christ, in which this faith in a corporal resurrection found its confirmation, is regarded in the New Testament not only as the pledge of the like destiny for men who are Christ's brethren, but also as the pledge of a glorious future for the material world as a whole. Again, in Christ's person the Word, who is God, is made flesh. Thus the dignity of the material nature is vindicated by its becoming for ever the organ of Godhead ; and the same great principle interprets the sacraments. In them also material nature and the human body receive their consecration, and the material is seen as the organ of the spiritual.

There is a coherence and solidarity, then, in " the articles of the faith," and one fundamental doctrine of God and of man is the key to the whole Catholic building. A Christian philosophy will start by the vindication of these Biblical conceptions, and proceeding from this standing-ground, will be able to exhibit the whole doctrinal and moral structure of the faith as the harmonious expression of one or two luminous principles.

IV

It is obvious, I think, that there is a similar cohesiveness among the characteristic doctrines which we group under the name of " Modernism." The root conception is again found in the doctrine of God—but now it is the idea of God as immanent in the order of the world which is allowed to dominate, either absolutely to the point of denying His transcendence, or only so far as to produce a marked reluctance to appeal to it. The disclosure of God then is to be found in the order of the universe ; anything which seems to break in upon that order is found repellent. Sin is either in principle denied by a doctrine of determinism, which makes the idea of responsibility and sin fundamentally a delusion, or it is minimized. There is an inevitable upward tendency, as in the world as a whole, so in the individual soul. Sins are the mistakes or the delusions which experience and enlightenment will overcome. What is wanted is nothing else than more light and guidance. Jesus Christ comes as the Light of the World, but He comes purely in the natural order. The goal of the world is the incarnation of God in humanity. It is a gradual process of which Jesus is the foremost specimen. He is in truth a purely human personality and non-miraculous. He is the noblest and most perfect specimen of our race, the sinless son of man, and therefore Son of God. He is divine just because He is simply and perfectly human. What we need from Him is a perfect example and a fresh inspiration. We do not need vicarious sacrifice to make reconciliation for sin—only the fuller evidence of divine love. We ask to be shown the true way of human life and to be stimulated to follow it. Christ is pre-eminently Son of God and the Word made flesh, but so are all men in a measure in their fundamental nature, and are to become so more and more under the influence of Christ. The Spirit of God which worked pre-eminently in Him dwells also in a measure in all of us. It is the universal spirit of humanity which He stirs into consciousness. The corporal resurrection as the first disciples believed in it was, no doubt, an illusion ; but it was a symbol of the real resurrection, which is the assurance of human immortality. The story of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is the symbol of a universal presence which we only need to realize. Similarly the sacraments of the Church are symbols of fellowship, human and divine, by which our faith and consciousness are quickened. Again, the expectation of the Second Coming was an illusion, bred of Jewish tradition, in the minds of Christ Himself and His disciples, but it was also a symbol of the truth that the issue of human development is to be the permeation of all institutions and civilizations by the Spirit of Christ which is the universal Spirit of God ; and the one God who is manifested in the whole world as Father, and in the correspondence of the human will as Son, and in consciousness as Spirit, will be " all things in all."

We are all familiar with these ideas, expressed separately, at this point and at that, by the theologians who are solicitous that we should revise our creeds. But in fact they constitute a sequence of ideas dependent upon the substitution of the idea of divine immanence—God in nature, as the dominant or exclusive conception of God—for the idea of the transcendent Creator, not as the only, but as the controlling idea. All the 'Modernist' conceptions which I have sought to set in consequential order follow very closely the Biblical and Catholic conceptions and have a like sound. But really they represent much more closely the ideas which historical Christianity combated and dispossessed, revised in the light of the modern category of development.

It must be confessed that they depart very widely from the historical Creed. The root of the divergence lies in the conception of God which is made dominant ; and the effect of the divergence is to derogate from the sense of the liberty and majesty of God and the heinousness of sin, on which, in the Catholic religion, the appreciation of His love has been based. We must hold to the ancient Creed, which has history and experience on its side. But we must never allow ourselves to forget that what has given the modern reaction against the Creed of the Church its strength has been in great measure the Church's own defects. And like the Greek Fathers in their time and the Schoolmen in theirs, we must see to it that nothing which makes a legitimate appeal either to the reason or the conscience or the aesthetic faculty of man is allowed to seem alien to the world-wide scope of the religion which calls itself Catholic.

APPENDED NOTE (see p. 938)

THE RATIONALITY OF THE BELIEF IN THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF GOD

In *Belief in God*, after reviewing briefly the grounds of Theism (pp. 46–61), I endeavoured (1) to show the inadequacy, both intellectual and moral, of any belief in God which represents Him as simply the immanent Spirit of the universe and ultimately as much dependent upon nature as nature is upon Him (see pp. 61–6 and 69–73); (2) to vindicate the idea of positive self-revelation on the part of God as an idea which cannot be rationally excluded (pp. 66–9 and 74–5)—I think it is extraordinary how little consideration the philosophers are willing to give to it; (3) to give the reasons—to my mind the overwhelming reasons—for believing that such a revelation has actually been given, especially through the Hebrew prophets and in Jesus Christ (pp. 75–109); (4) to vindicate the intellectual results of this revelation (pp. 111–32) as consistent with the whole of our knowledge (pp. 133–70, 230–51); (5) to call attention to the moral power consequent upon the acceptance of the Biblical faith.

Since the above volume was written I have been criticized for taking too little into account the arguments of the psychologists. But I think the argument of the psychologists against the objective reality of God turns out to be equally destructive of the objective reality of all things and persons. And I do not think any argument is ultimately formidable which would undermine our confidence that real things and persons exist independently of us, and are by us knowable. This is the kind of realism—involving no doubt in some sort a fundamental act of faith—which "common sense" requires, and which philosophy must accept. This is Lord Balfour's point in *Theism and Thought.*[1] On the subject of the psychological argument I would refer to a popularly written, but deep-thinking little volume, by Mr. Balmforth, *Is Christian Experience an Illusion?* (Student Christian Movement, 1923).

Since *Belief in God* was written I have found myself much assisted by Professor E. W. Hobson's Gifford Lectures, *The Domain of Natural Science* (Cambridge, 1923), which with rigid impartiality seeks to show us what exactly the claim of natural science amounts to in the interpretation of the universe. It seems to me to be a valuable contribution to thought. Also I have been greatly impressed by a book which has not received sufficient notice, *The Natural Theology of Evolution*, by J. N. Shearman (Allen & Unwin, 1915). Anyone who is disposed to think that the doctrine of biological evolution has disposed of the "argument from design" should read this book.

I fear I cannot agree with Dr. Arthur Robinson's optimistic estimate of *The Trend of Thought in Contemporary Philosophy* (Longmans, 1922). It is hard to say whether it has any decided trend. The idealism of Bradley and the physical realism of Alexander appear to be irreconcilable with one another and with the Christian idea of God. And the "new psychology" is, I suppose, inconsistent with all three. But certainly the absence of agreement among the schools of philosophy, and the marked tendency among the men of science to regard it as outside their province to interpret the meaning of nature and life as a whole, ought to give us Christians courage to study and proclaim our message, and show its power to interpret experience, and its coherence with all that can claim to be called knowledge.

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[1] Gifford Lectures (Hodder & Stoughton).

CHAPTER XI

PRESENT-DAY APPLICATION

I

We have come to the end of a very long train of thought. We began by considering the intellectual and moral situation of to-day, especially as it appears in the English-speaking countries. We found that there has occurred, within the course of the last two generations, a collapse, on a very large scale, of the old religious tradition in all classes of our society. The intellectual causes of this collapse we found to be fairly easy to indicate. Equally obvious are the social causes which have produced a widespread alienation, both of "the workers," and of all those who are convinced that our industrial and international life have been built up on rotten principles, from "the Churches" which they identify with the established order against which they are rebellious. These intellectual and social movements have been accompanied with a wave of moral rebelliousness, fostered by the war, which has been "up against" the Commandments as well as the Creed and the Bible. And the result of these disintegrating influences is apparent in a general condition of religious and moral unsettlement, and an almost chaotic individualism of belief or scepticism or blatant disbelief. Strongholds of tradition remain, reiterating conservative formulas and warnings. But the area of confusion is very wide, and it is reflected and fostered in popular literature.

The intellectual remedy for this confusion, if remedy there be, must be sought nowhere so much as in the deliberate reconstruction of belief from its foundations, inspired by a fearless trust in real freedom of thought. The signs of the times are adverse to anything like the prospect of a mass-recovery of faith. It must be a matter of individual recoveries or re-assurances of faith, resulting in groups of men and women, larger, more numerous, and more confident than exist at present, who know what they believe and why they believe, and can find a new power and meaning in the old Creeds and institutions of the Church. It is therefore at the reconstruction of belief in individuals that these volumes were aimed.

The natural starting-point for religious belief is authority. Of those who to-day are deliberate believers in the Christian religion the vast majority have received it on authority, and, so far as they have verified it, have verified it in practice. But among those who are more or less educated and interested in intellectual questions, the feature of the day is that the insurgence of new knowledge along the channels of natural science and historical criticism has discredited religious authority, and generated a profound suspicion that the grounds of belief have been shaken or destroyed. Against such suspicion an appeal to authority is in most cases of no use. The violent changes from atheism and immorality to a credulous and uncritical acceptance of Catholicism, which appear to be common in France, are, if not unknown, yet not familiar to us here. What is familiar is a gradual change of mind in honest and good men. To promote such a gradual movement what is needed is that religious belief should vindicate its reasonableness afresh, and its consistency with the whole of knowledge and experience. Indeed, if religious authority is to be true to its own best traditions, its validity must be vindicated, not only by showing its power to inspire and redeem human life, but also by demonstrating its adequacy in the court of reason and free enquiry ; as was done of old, when it succeeded in making of Platonism the instrument of its own theology, and later in converting the revived Aristotelianism of the Middle Ages. In the same spirit its task is now not only to convert and sanctify souls, as it has always been doing, but to show itself at home in the modern world of science and criticism and sociology.

Thus we set ourselves to this task—to seek to build up a fabric of belief in God and in Jesus Christ without any conscious appeal to authority, solely by reference to rational and historical standards. In *Belief in God* we investigated the grounds of theism and found its philosophical foundations in the general sense still unshaken. But the God whom philosophy offers to our faith we discovered to be profoundly unsatisfying to the demands of the soul of men. We also saw that the belief in God on which our Western civilization as well as our religious life has been based was, in fact, directly derived from the prophets of Israel and from Jesus Christ, and claimed to be, not a conclusion drawn from the reasoning of philosophers, but a gradual revelation or self-disclosure of God to man. We must not allow ourselves to put revelation and reason in sharp contrast ; for reason is confessedly the light of God within us. But we found no justification for dismissing as irrational the idea that the God after whom reason gropes and whom it dimly discovers should be such a being as can meet the aspirations of reason by positive self-disclosure from His own side. And when we studied the record of the prophets and of Jesus, we found the conviction become irresistible that here we really have, as nowhere else in the world, the word of God.

This is the first challenge we addressed to those who would think freely: Can you, trusting your own best conscience and judgement, stand face to face with the long line of prophets and with Jesus Christ, and reject their claim to be the vehicles of a real self-disclosure of God, as being at bottom only an illusion? Can you do this, having in view not only the weight of their own testimony, but also the profound difference which its acceptance has made in the experience of innumerable men and the no less profound difference which the withdrawal of this faith would make? For the moral effectiveness added to life, over long periods and wide reaches, by a particular belief cannot be left out of sight in the estimate of its truth.

The question whether the very distinctive and unique doctrine about God and man which we owe to the prophets of Israel and to Jesus Christ must be taken for truth is, in reality, the most fundamental of all questions for religion, and the one on our answer to which our answers to subsequent questions will in the main depend. The Hebrew faith in God, as intensely personal, as possessing moral character, as being at the last resort eternal Love, as the absolute Creator of all that is, prior to the universe which He sustains by His presence in it, and the judge of all free and rational spirits, we found to be in no conflict with our knowledge as a whole, and to be alone capable of interpreting and sustaining the higher moral and spiritual experience of man. Thus those who, on the whole, followed along with the argument of our first volume accepted this faith, provisionally at least, as a faith to be applied to experience and put to account in life.

On the basis of this faith we set to work to answer the question: What think ye of Christ? Here we found ourselves in the presence of so wide a conspiracy of our intellectuals, refusing dogmatically to take into consideration anything but a non-miraculous and purely humanitarian conception of Christ, that we were compelled to recall to mind the fallibility of philosophers, and to stimulate afresh our resolution to think freely. We saw reason to refuse the conceptions of a *merely* immanent God and a closed system of nature, and vindicated for the Creator the freedom to take fresh action to redeem a world which sin had ruined. We took note that famous "critics," who have biassed their criticism by *a priori* refusals of the supernatural, are in consequence driven to treat the Gospel evidence with great violence, and produce in effect strangely divergent pictures of the historical Jesus. We sought with openness of mind to trace the development of the first faith in Jesus Christ, and we saw reason to believe that the faith in the Incarnation, as St. Paul and St. John proclaim it, is the faith which corresponds to and interprets the facts as a whole, as no other estimate of His person can do; and the faith of the Catholic Church, as it found expression in the Creed and Councils, we recognized as in substance neither more nor less than the faith of St. Paul and St. John, only now formulated in opposition to certain radically hostile tendencies of thought. It is true that the traditional faith has been at times associated with uncritical history, and with an impossible theory of the effect of inspiration, and with estimates of Christ's Godhead which tended to efface His real manhood, and with doctrines of redemption against which our moral nature rebels. But we sought to purge the idea of the Incarnate Person and His work of all such associations, and to maintain a doctrine of His person and work which is fully in accord with the historical evidence, which is in no respect an offence to our reason or conscience, and which in its whole substance is just the faith of the New Testament and the Church which has been verified in an almost world-wide experience. This was the aim of *Belief in Christ.*

It remained for us in this last book to confront another claim of the critics—that is, to separate the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and the doctrine of sacramental Catholicism, which is now commonly acknowledged as the teaching of St. Paul and St. John, from the teaching of Jesus Himself. He, it is contended, had no idea of founding a church or instituting sacraments. This position solidly contradicts the assumption of the Acts and the Epistles (chap. i, p. 621). There is no more unconvincing treatment of evidence, I think, than is to be found in the denial that St. Paul's " tradition " about the Last Supper was, like his tradition about the resurrection of Christ, something which he had " received " at his conversion—" from the Lord " as its source, but through the Church which delivered it to him. It is true, we saw, that our Lord did not found a new Church ; but all the evidence converges to show that He refounded the old Church on a new basis, and re-equipped it with officers in the persons of the twelve apostles and with certain sacramental rites of fellowship (chap. ii, p. 655). And the suggestion that " sacramentalism," as it appears in St. Paul's Epistles, with the doctrine of salvation through the immanent Spirit and glorified Christ, was something alien to the historical Jesus and His Jewish disciples, and was assimilated in the first Gentile churches from the mystery religions of Paganism, we saw cause to reject as violating both the evidence and the principles of probability. We recognized in the mystery religions an influence which contributed materially to the spread of the gospel and the Church—as part of what older scholars called " the divine preparation " for the catholic gospel—but the source of the original doctrines and practices of the New Testament we found to lie unmistakably in the Jewish tradition, and in the experiences through which the first Christians had passed in the school of Jesus Christ (chap. iii, p. 692).

Having thus reached the conclusion of our reconstructive argument, it remained for us to consider what the acceptance of the faith not only in God the Father, and in the Incarnate Son Jesus Christ, but also in the Holy Spirit, and in the Church as the temple of the Holy Spirit and the body of Christ—what this faith involves and means. Thus we analysed the idea of the Church and of the sacraments, as it is found in the Epistles and the Acts, and we found there, unmistakably, the conception of the one visible society as the only covenanted sphere of Christ's redemption. Membership in Christ and membership in the Church are represented as the same thing in different aspects, inasmuch as union with God is not otherwise offered to us than in the fellowship of the believers. The principle of the sacraments we saw to be that they are social ceremonies, in which the grace of the Spirit is attached at point after point to the community life. And the unity of the community, the Catholic Church—threatened from the first by disruptive forces—we found to be secured by three main links: the apostolic ministry to which all must adhere, the sacraments of the society in which all must participate, and the faith or "word of God" which all must hold in common (chap. iv, p. 728).

We then passed on to discuss the nature of the authority of the Church (chap. v, p. 771). The primary purpose of the Church is to represent the Kingdom of God in the world—that is, to exhibit such a type of human life, individual and social, as shall both glorify God and be a moral attraction to mankind. But this life draws its motives from a certain doctrine, and the doctrine on which it is based proclaims itself as a divine revelation—a word of God. This word of God as taught by the apostles constitutes the tradition of the Church and is the basis of its authority. We took note of the very conservative and moderate character of this authority, as the ancient and especially the Greek-speaking Church conceived it. It was content to hand on and defend the original tradition, and to make its appeal to the original Scriptures now being gathered into a canon. It was so confident of the scripturalness and reasonableness of its tradition that it regularly sought to stimulate enquiry by constant appeals to reason and Scripture; and it was very sparing in dogmatic requirements.

Then we contrasted with this the imperialist conception of centralized authority, and the love of uniformity and regimentation, which have more and more characterized the Roman Church (chap. vi, p. 804). Doctrinally considered, we found that this spirit has expressed itself in dogmas which are neither consistent with history nor justified by the ancient canons of tradition. The religion of the Roman Catholic Church presents all the appearance of a one-sided development of catholicity in the direction of autocracy, and the Eastern Orthodox Church in rejecting its claim has simply been abiding by the tradition. Then (chap vii, p. 828) we examined the plea of development, in the larger sense, by which alone the dogmatic claim of Rome can justify itself, and we found in it really a false idea of development. The true development of the Church does not lie in the heightening and extension of the dogmatic claim by a logical process, which more and more tends to make the burden upon the intellect intolerable and swamps the freedom of the spirit; it lies rather in the constant self-adaptation of the Church to new demands of new races, new knowledge, new conditions of society. For this sort of development the *minimum* rather than the *maximum* of required dogma is for the advantage of the Church. There is no doubt a constant system of doctrine which constitutes Catholicism. But it is intolerable to suppose that the Church should become more burdensome to the intelligence and narrower in its appeal as it goes down the generations and widens out into the world. Thus we would find our ideal in the minimum rather than the maximum of dogmatic requirement.

Then (in chap. viii, p. 864) we applied ourselves to the authority of Scripture. We found that the appeal to Scripture as supplying a final testing-ground of legitimate doctrine is the main safeguard against the tendency to multiply the dogmas which authority would seek to impose upon the conscience. The function of the Church is to teach the faith with authority; and the function of the "open Bible" coupled with free enquiry is to preserve the faith from illegitimate accretion. We found also that a recognition of the unique inspiration of Scripture and a profound reverence for it is compatible with the critical treatment of the documents.

Then a summary was offered of the doctrines which constitute Catholicism, estimated by the ancient standards (chap. ix, p. 902). And as a list of such numerous articles of faith is alarming to our intellects, it was shown (chap. x, p. 937) that these articles, or little limbs of the body of doctrine, are not really separable affirmations, but depend with rational consistency upon the affirmation of the central principles concerning God and man which constitute the message of the prophets and of Jesus our Lord, and which found their fulfilment in the Incarnation of the Son and the mission of His Spirit. One fundamental act of assent to this word of God carries with it the general position of orthodoxy.

II

Our argument has been largely historical. We have been occupied in considering what the religion of Christ has in fact been, as it is represented in the New Testament and in the tradition of the Church from the beginning. This appeal to our origins, which is distasteful to the modern mind, saturated in a popular philosophy of development which is a misunderstanding of its scientific meaning, is nevertheless essential to Christianity. It is involved in the fundamental principle of the finality of the Christ.[1] In Him we have the final expression of God, or the Word of God, in terms of humanity, and the final expression of humanity in union with God. And this was found to imply, and does imply, a fixed creed about God and man and redemption, to which adequate expression was given in the New Testament. The developments of Christianity will be rich and manifold, as rich and manifold as are the capacities of humanity in all its tribes and phases to bring out into prominence its aspects and meanings ; but the fundamental faith, with its positive implications of idea and fact, must remain the same. In a changing world it is yet in the main to the unchanging needs of the human soul, in its aspirations after moral freedom and eternal life, and in its struggles with sin and suffering and death, and to the unchanging requirements of human fellowship, that the catholic gospel appeals. There is a " general heart of man," and therefore there can be a catholic and substantially unchanging gospel. And there has been such demonstrably in history. There is something in Christendom, below all its divisions, which responds to the test of "*ubique, semper, ab omnibus*" in the sense of its author, though the break-up of Western

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[1] See *Belief in Christ*, pp. 611 ff.

Christendom at the Reformation has introduced, as we shall recognize directly, a complication into the appeal. Thus, in a religion which proclaims the finality of Christ, the appeal to antiquity is inevitable.

Moreover, since the Church became the established religion of whole nations, there has been an inextricable confusion between the standard and polity of the Church and the traditional standards and political tendencies of nations and races and classes. If we want to understand the essence of Christianity we must look at it, long and steadily, as it emerged from Palestine and ran in a broadening stream, but substantially unconfused, into the great world of the Roman Empire.

Thus we are unashamed in our appeal to antiquity and Scripture. And those who, on the whole—though, it may be, only provisionally—have accepted the argument of these volumes, have in their minds a clear understanding of what the Catholic Church of Christ has meant ; and it is with this in our minds that we turn back to the confusing spectacle of the present day.

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"Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth," and "there are many antichrists." Such is no doubt the condition of things to-day. But in the midst of all our social and international anxieties there is, and that in many countries, a widespread conviction that there is no redemption for human nature—whether socially or individually—but in the name of Jesus of Nazareth ; and there is a feeling associated with this conviction that the cause of Christ is infinitely weakened by our religious divisions, in acquiescing in which for so long we have "done despite unto the Spirit of grace." We do well to pay heed to these two thoughts or emotions which are widespread among the best men and women belonging to very various religious traditions.

Now, I see no prospect of reunion among Christian denominations on any wide scale within the measurable future. It may be that times of Antichrist lie ahead of us, in which disaster and suffering and loneliness may drive Christians into unity. But whatever the future holds, there is, it seems to me, one thing which can be seriously undertaken at once, the importance of which it is hard to exaggerate, that is, the union of Christians in their various sections for moral and social witness and service.

It is in this that our traditional Christianity has been so lamentably and increasingly partial and one-sided. Christianity is, first of all, " The Way." It is a life—a social life to be lived. It is as a life, rather than a doctrine, that in the New Testament it makes its tremendous and difficult claim upon men. The doctrine is only the necessary background of the life. There can be no question that our Lord intended His Church to make its appeal to the world mainly by the life which men saw it living. In this way His disciples were to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the city set on a hill. And when the Church recovered herself from her first moral peril, due to the vast invasion from the Gentile world, she maintained her moral standard, her standard alike of self-control and brotherhood, through the long days when Christianity remained a dangerous venture. It was in the main as " The Way " that she conquered.

" Established Christianity," whether in the civilized Roman Empire or in half-barbarous tribes or in modern nations—the sort of Christianity which claims to embrace the whole society, which it costs men nothing to profess, and into which children are baptized practically as a matter of course—appears to be as audacious a departure from the method of

Christ as can well be conceived. Whether it was a venture made under the guidance of providence, or the greatest of all the mistakes or corporate sins of the Church, it is not for us to decide.[1] In imagination we ponder inevitably over the question of what the history of the Church and the world would have been if in the days of Constantine the Church, while gratefully accepting from the Emperors full toleration, had obstinately refused to accept the imperial power as an instrument for propagating and maintaining religion, had jealously maintained its independence and its former standards of moral discipline, preferring reality of profession to numbers ; and if later it had altogether refused to baptize the Franks in platoons in the suite of their chief, as if they were only just changing their old hero gods for a better and stronger one. We can dream of the difference it would have made in the history of the world and the Church, but we can only dream. The facts were otherwise. What price was paid for the assistance of the strong arm of emperors and kings we know. Christianity began to cost men nothing to profess ; or, rather, it very soon cost them their life to profess anything else. The difference in the average moral level of church membership was immediately apparent. We see it already in the sermons of Chrysostom in the East and Augustine in the West. The average moral level had become what it is to-day.

We must not refuse to recognize the glory of the mediaeval conception of Christianity, or the work which it did in the taming of the nations, or the witness which it bore to the solidarity and brotherhood of men and nations in the catholic society, or the grandeur of the moral and social principles of

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[1] But I find it very hard to doubt that the Church in fact unconsciously succumbed just to that temptation which its Master resisted when He refused to accept "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" at Satan's price.

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the Schoolmen and moralists of the Church, or the constant influence of the saints. Nevertheless, it remains true that in fact the Church accepted, what our Lord so systematically refused, a double standard, the standard for saints and the standard for average sinners or conventional Christians; and the practical attention of the Church was to an extent difficult to exaggerate, and more and more, directed to saving individual souls, by getting them into purgatory at their death and then redeeming them from purgatory by powers it was supposed to possess, though they had never made any serious attempt to live the life which Christ prescribed to His disciples.

Of the moral witness of the Church in our own country we know the record: it is in many respects an honourable record; but in many respects it has been startlingly deficient. It has been content, flatly contrary to the spirit of our Lord, to draw a marked distinction between respectable and disreputable sins —stigmatizing drunkenness and violence and fornication, while it has practically condoned avarice and the love of money, and contempt of social inferiors, and selfish luxury, and injustice—as to which 'respectable' sins we know the mind of our Master. Politically it has been strangely content to be merely nationalist and patriotic. It is pitiful, indeed, to think of the extent to which nationalism has been allowed to eat the heart out of the catholic religion, not in England only, or Germany, but in the Orthodox Churches; and to mark how the greatest of international societies, the Roman Catholic Church, has borne no witness in these last days—no audible witness, at least—against nationalist and militarist excesses in France and Italy. It is pitiful to contrast the enthusiasm of the Church in many lands for the great war with the feeble support it has given to the cause of international peace.

I do not want to weary my readers by saying constantly the same things. But I write under a profound sense that the first duty of the Church today, in all lands, and particularly in our own, is to re-erect the ethical standard of Christianity not only with regard to sexual relations and the control of our passions, but also with regard to commercial morality and the obligation of truth both in commerce and politics, to the right and (much more) the duty of property and the sin of avarice, and to the meaning of brotherhood and the equal spiritual value of all human souls. On most of these subjects we have had committees which have produced reports. There is, however, still much to be done by scholars and thinkers. And there is much more to be done in reducing their conclusions to something like a popular moral creed, and converting the conscience of the Church to its acceptance. What we have to remind ourselves of is that the Christ who is to judge the world—both the living and the dead—is the same Jesus of Nazareth who spoke the Sermon on the Mount and the parables of judgement and mercy, and that He does not change His character with the changes in the Church's disposition.

I know that such a fundamental ethical reform in the Church's teaching would be very unpopular in many directions. It would encounter many prejudices. It would alarm many vested interests. What sort of restoration of moral discipline it might lead the way to, I do not know. But I feel certain of one thing—that it, and it alone, would attract and win a great body of men and women such as would have been among the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth; that it would cut right across all our denominational divisions; that it might unite all the most real friends of Christ in co-operative effort even at once, while the long process is gone through of thinking out afresh our theological principles; and that it, and it alone, will make the world understand what the Catholic Church is for.

III

I trust that the interpretation of Catholicism which this volume has sought to give will be acceptable to a considerable number of the theologians of the Orthodox Churches, and will at least prove no obstacle to the reunion with them for which we Anglicans pray. If we can agree on the necessary doctrine, and on the necessary conditions of valid ordination and administration of sacraments, I hope it may prove possible to be mutually tolerant of great diversities of custom and ceremonial. We feel a profound sympathy with the Orthodox Churches in their present calamities, all the more that we know we have not done what we ought to have done to avert them; and we venerate the spirit of martyrdom which they have never ceased to display. But we recognize that there is a long tradition of mutual alienation and misunderstanding between us which only time and friendly intercourse and much prayer can overcome. We must not be impatient. What I trust is that those who share the point of view which this book has sought to express may look hopefully forward to ultimate reunion between Orthodox and Anglican.

As we look toward the great Church of Rome, we know that in the main we Englishmen owe to her our Christianity, and we should delight to acknowledge the primacy of the Bishop of Rome among the churches of Christendom. As we read the record of the separation of the sixteenth century we wonder wistfully whether, if religion had not been so much mixed up with politics and with the passions of imperious monarchs, the separation need have occurred or need have become inveterate. But these are idle dreams; and as things stand at present no way towards reunion seems to be open. Since the early sixteenth century the breach has become wider and the obstacles larger and more definitely fixed. We can but wait and pray, in faithfulness to the truth as we see it.

I know that a great deal in this book will provoke and distress English Free Churchmen and Scottish Presbyterians and those of other lands who symbolize with them. I desire to acknowledge with all my heart the wonderful and continuous evidences of the work of the Spirit of God among them; and to express the gratitude which thousands among us feel for theological and spiritual help received from them. But I am sure that at the Reformation they broke certain fundamental principles and laws of the Catholic Church. There is very much in their spirit, their traditions, and their institutions which the Catholic Church needs, and which in a reunited Church must be retained; but there cannot, I am convinced, be a reunited Church except on the basis of the Catholic Creeds, and the acknowledgement of the sacramental principle as well as the due administration of the sacraments, and the recognition of the episcopal succession as the link of connexion and continuity in the Catholic body. Here again, then, unity seems a long way off. I do not know if anything can heal the breaches, unless very evil times force us together. But meanwhile the best preparation for future unity lies, I believe, in the detached and disinterested study of our Christian origins and in close fellowship for social service.

IV

And now I come finally to our own Anglican communion. I confess that I cannot rank myself among those who can speak of the Church of England as "on the whole the most glorious church in

Christendom" or of her Book of Common Prayer as "incomparable." I find that her history in many of its aspects and characteristics makes me feel ashamed and depressed. But if there is in history the stamp of a divine providence on any society, it is set on the Anglican Church. It was marked out in the sixteenth century to hold together the ancient Catholic tradition both in creed and order with the appeal of the Reformation to the open Bible as the final court of reference for Christians; and so to present a type of Catholicism which the world had forgotten, which should have priests but not be priest-ridden, and should accept the Catholic tradition but keep it purged by the free use of reason and an all-pervading scripturalness.

Those who hold this ideal for Anglicanism will probably agree in certain determinations and desires.

1. That while we accept provisionally the situation fixed for us in the 'settlement' of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and embodied in the Book of Common Prayer, as being one under which it is tolerable to live and work, we should insist on making our constant appeal, not to the particular arrangements and compromises of our Reformation, but to the ancient Catholic tradition as verified in the New Testament. The particular settlements arrived at in the reigns of the Tudor sovereigns were manifestly compromises conditioned by the determination to keep together in a National Church under the headship of the Crown the contending theological parties and the silent, moderate, and conservative mass of the nation. In detail the compromises had in them sometimes much more of temporary policy than of abiding principle. But the underlying principle was never abandoned, and was brought to the front again by Hooker and the seventeenth-century divines—to maintain the Catholic tradition conditioned by the appeal to Scripture, and to exclude the Romanist

accretions which had imperilled the legitimate liberty of national Churches, and rendered nugatory the appeal to antiquity and Scripture.

2. To be true to this principle we need reforms in our service-book, or if that is impossible without doing violence to the Evangelical conscience, then, as is now proposed, the recognition of alternative forms within the existing rite, which shall give sufficient expression to undoubted features in the Catholic tradition. Such would be the restoration of a 'canon' in the eucharist less meagre and more conformable with tradition; and the recovery of public prayers for the dead, and a fuller commemoration of the saints, and prayers to God on the ancient model that we may have the assistance of their intercessions; and the alteration of the preface to the Confirmation Service which obscures the sacramental character of the rite. We shall also ask for the removal of passages from the service-book which are not really scriptural and which are a stumbling-block to many men's consciences, like the phrase which describes infants as "children of wrath" and the text of the Three Heavenly Witnesses in one of the Epistles. The full list of needed changes or additions would be a fairly long one. Some of these reforms it seems likely we shall have speedily granted. For some of them we may have to wait. But we must not cease to make our reasonable wishes known.

3. I am stating an opinion which I know to be shared by many among us of different schools of thought when I say that the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, while remaining in respect as an interesting historical document, ought to cease to be regarded in any sense as a theological standard. They belong markedly to an epoch of controversy which has passed away. They contain a number of expressions or statements which are needlessly repellent to the modern spirit, and others equally so to the Catholic

spirit; and at many points they sought to serve their pacific purpose by a vagueness of statement which makes them both valueless and perplexing. It is true that they are 'patient' of a tolerable meaning by the help of a great deal of explanation; it is true also that since 1865 the assent which the clergy are required to give to them is vague and general—the common talk of the clergy "signing the articles" being simply a survival from the former period; but nothing, I think, is gained by their retention which can be compared to the disadvantages of a theological standard which has ceased to carry either serious obligation or theological enlightenment. I would have those who are being ordained required to express their assent (not to the Thirty-nine Articles, but) to the Nicene Creed, and the Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; and also, with a solemn sense of responsibility, to give the required answers to the questions in the Ordination Service which affirm the truth of the Scriptures[1] and their position as the final testing-ground of necessary doctrine.

4. Conditions are not favourable to trials for heresy; and even if our Church Courts were reconstituted on tolerable lines, we should do well to shrink from them. But we sorely need a revival of the spirit of what I would call a rational loyalty to accepted obligations. I dare say that in twenty years' time it will have become evident that as regards the person of our Lord the alternative is between a frank Unitarianism on the one side and a frank adherence to the Creeds both as regards facts and doctrine on the other. Meanwhile, the claim of a few of our Modernists to retain their positions as ministers of the Church while they profess opinions which appear to be quite inconsistent with the Creeds they recite

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[1] The question being modified by an explanatory addition as now suggested: see above, p. 907, n. 2.

and the service-book which they use has undoubtedly a very demoralizing effect. We have a few others on the opposite flank of the Church who affirm apparently the whole of the Roman teaching, excepting, with a strange inconsistency, the central point of the jurisdiction and authority of the Pope, which affects so fundamentally our right to teach and administer the sacraments. No doubt these relatively small groups bulk too large in the public eye. But they have generated among the laity a sense of the hollowness of the formal professions of the clergy, which makes them distrust our honesty. On the Catholic side this suspiciousness is even more justified by the apparent ignoring on the part of many of the clergy of the solemn declaration, in virtue of which alone they can be admitted to any clerical office—"In public prayers and administration of the sacraments I will use the form in the said book [the Prayer Book] prescribed and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority." Let us give the freest interpretation to the last exceptive clause, and recognize that no clergyman can be blamed who uses whatever dispensations from the obligation contracted his bishop thinks himself entitled to give him ; but let it be a definite and public dispensation, so that all can be cognizant of it ; and, granted this modification, the rites of the Prayer Book, whether we like them or not, must be followed, with whatever varieties of accompanying ceremony, as binding upon us. 'Devotions' of various kinds, and deviations from the prescribed standard, more or less lawless, do undoubtedly attract a number of people. We should wish to go as far as possible in meeting spiritual needs of different kinds. Nevertheless I question whether what has been thus gained can be set in comparison with what has been lost by the scandal which seeming lawlessness is causing. There is no doubt that there is among the laity a widespread questioning of clerical honesty which is doing the most serious moral harm and which is due to what they see or hear of in the most opposite sections of the Church. What we need is a revived sense of rational loyalty to that particular portion of the Church we belong to, as well as to the great Church Catholic which lies beyond. (And in matters of rite and ceremony it is the particular Church to which we specially owe obedience.) And we need even more a deepened sense of the moral seriousness of formal obligations contracted before God and man. There appears to be a noxious form of party spirit current among us, which emboldens us to stand by one another in doing what, alone before God, we could not justify.

5. I should be untrue to convictions which I share with, I believe, only a few if I did not say, finally, that, whatever is to be said in other ages and other situations for established Churches, I believe the existence of an Anglican Establishment to-day in our country is inconsistent with the actual state of beliefs in the nation, and a real disadvantage to religion on the whole. And I cherish the belief, well-grounded, I feel sure, that if we were disestablished, our internal cohesiveness would prove to be surprisingly great, The solid block of the Anglican communion means to abide by its principles and will hold together.

. . . . .

It will have been evident that the writer of this book is very much alive to the faulty character of all parts of the Catholic Church. Certainly when he says *I believe in the Holy Catholic Church*, he means with St. Thomas *I believe in the Holy Spirit vivifying the Church.* For underlying all laxities, defects, exaggerations, and unworthy accommodations to the world, of which Church history is so lamentably full, there is a divine movement, of which the Church

Catholic is the organ, which had its beginning in the call of Abraham and the redemption of Israel, and its consummation in our Lord and the mission of His Spirit, and has had its development in all the history of the Church. To the faith on which this movement rests the saints of every generation and country are the witnesses, and with it the moral and spiritual hopes of humanity are bound up. There are many of us who are at times tempted to disloyalty or assailed by doubt. " Yea," we cry with the psalmist, " I had almost said even as they "—the adversaries and the sceptics : " but lo, then I should have condemned the generation of thy children." That is the true reply in all such temptations. I cannot repudiate the fellowship of the children of God, or forget the great cloud of witnesses who watch how I play my part in the great conflict.

> " It should seem
> Impossible for me to fail—so watched."

Nor, while we labour and pray for the restoration of visible unity—" the bond of peace "—among the divided sections of Christ's Church on earth, shall we ever suffer ourselves to forget that the actual principle of unity in the Church is the Holy Spirit ; and though our divisions lamentably mar the exhibition of that unity to the world, they are not deep enough to extinguish it. For in spite of them, and beneath them, He is at work binding all the members of the one body who are still on earth into union with their Lord in heaven and with the whole company of the faithful in the heavenly places.

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